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ALL FOR LOVE.

Scene 1.



J. Roberts del.

Engraved for Bell's British Theatre Aug: 11th 1776.

Thornthwaite Sculp.

MR. HARTLEY in the Character of CLEOPATRA.
I'll die, I will not bear it.

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Bell's Characteristical Edition.

ALL FOR LOVE; OR, THE WORLD WELL LOST.

A TRAGEDY. BY MR. DRYDEN.

AS PERFORMED AT THE THEATRE-ROYAL DRURY-LANE.

Regulated from the Prompt-Book, by permission of the Managers,

BY MR. HOPKINS PROMPTER.

CHARACTERISTICS.

I am made a shallow-forded stream—Seen to the bottom, all my clearness scorn'd—And all my faults expos'd—Why was I rais'd the meteor of the world—Hung in the skies, and blazing as I travell'd—Till all my fires were spent—But I have lost my reason, have disgrac'd—The name of Soldier with inglorious ease—Fate could not ruin me till I took pains—And work'd against my Fortune, chid her from me, &c. and now she is gone—Gone, gone, divorc'd for ever—How I have lov'd—Witness ye days and nights, and all ye hours, &c.—Give, you Gods!—Give to your boy, your Cæsar—This rattle of a globe to play withal—This gewgaw world, and put him cheaply off—I'll not be pleas'd with less than Cleopatra—I can never be conquer'd but by love.

ANTONY.

Tell her I'll none on't—I'm not sham'd of honest poverty—Not all the diamonds of the East can bribe—Ventidius from his faith—I can die with you when time shall serve—But Fortune calls upon us now to live—To fight, to conquer—Gods! let me see that day—And if I have ten years behind take all—I'll thank you for th' exchange—Now you shall see I love you—By my few hours of life—I am so pleas'd with this brave Roman fate—That I would not be Cæsar to outlive you—When we put off this flesh, and mount together—I shall be shewn to all th' ethereal crowd—Lo! this is he who dy'd with Antony—Gods! forgive me if you will; for I die perjur'd—Rather than kill my friend.

VENTIDIUS.

Nature has cast me in so soft a mould—That but to hear a story feign'd for pleasure—Of some sad lover's death, moistens my eyes—And robs me of my manhood—I discover'd—And blam'd the love of ruin'd Antony—Yet wish that I were he to be so ruin'd—Oh, friendship! friendship!—Ill canst thou answer this, and reason worse—If to have lov'd be guilt, then I have sinn'd—But if to have repented of that love—Can wash away my crime, I have repented—If I have offended past forgiveness—Let her not suffer; she is innocent.

DOLAB.

Pleasure forsook my earliest infancy—The luxury of others robb'd my cradle—And ravish'd thence the promise of a man—Cast out from Nature, disinherited—Of what her meanest children claim by birth—Gods! is this just, that I who know no joys—Must die because Cleopatra loves—Had I my wish these tyrants of all nature—Who lord it o'er mankind, should perish, perish—Each by the other's sword—I can work Cæsar—To spare her life, and let this madman perish—What can I say to save myself from death—No matter what becomes of Cleopatra—Ah me! my gift of lying is gone—And this court-devil, which I so oft have rais'd—Forfeakes me at my need—Oh! Fate comes too fast upon my wit—Hunts me too hard, and meets me at each double.

ALEXAS.

My love is so true—That I can neither hide it where it is—Nor show it where it is not—Nature meant me—A wife, a silly harmless household dove—Fond without art, and kind without deceit—But Fortune, that has made a mistress of me—Has thrust me out to the wide world unfurnish'd—Of falsehood to be happy—What tell'st thou me of Egypt—My life, my soul, is lost—Life too I would lose for him—My Antony is lost, and I can mourn—For nothing else but him—I have no more to lose—My love is a noble madness—I have lov'd with such transcendent passion—I soar'd at first quite out of reason's view—And now I am lost above it—I'll die; I will not bear it—'Tis too late to say I'm true—I'll prove it, and die—'Tis sweet to die—To rush into the dark abode of Death—And meet my love—And seize him first—I'll bring myself, my soul, to Antony—Death! I feel thee in my veins—Lay me on his breast.

CLEOPATRA.

Your Octavia—Still is your's—I have a heart disdain's your coldness—But a wife's virtue still surmounts that pride—I love your honour—Because it is mine—Sir, you are free, free ev'n from her you loathe—I have a soul like your's; I cannot take—Your love as alms, nor beg what I deserve—I may be dropt at Athens—No matter where; I never will complain—My duty shall be your's—To the dear pledges of our former love—My tenderness and care shall be transferr'd—And they shall cheer by turns my widow'd nights—A despair—To have you whole, and scorn to take you half.

OCTAVIA.

Whatever you resolve—I'll follow, ev'n to death.

CHARMION.

I only fear'd for you—But more should fear to live without you. Now, to be worthy—Of our great queen and mistress.

IRAS.



RECEIVED
JAN 11 1964

1944

TO THE RIGHT HON.

THOMAS EARL OF DANBY,

Vicecount Latimer, and Baron Osborne of Kiveton in Yorkshire, Lord High Treasurer of England, one of his Majesty's most honourable Privy Council, and Knight of the most noble Order of the Garter, &c.

MY LORD,

THE gratitude of poets is so troublesome a virtue to great men that you are often in danger of your own benefits, for you are threatened with some epistle, and not suffered to do good in quiet, or to compound for their silence whom you have obliged. Yet I confess I neither am nor ought to be surpris'd at this indulgence, for your Lordship has the same right to favour poetry which the great and noble have ever had;

Carmen amat, quisquis carmine digna gerit.

There is somewhat of a tie in nature betwixt those who are born for worthy actions and those who can transmit them to posterity; and though ours be much the inferiour part, it comes at least within the verge of alliance; nor are we unprofitable members of the commonwealth when we animate others to those virtues which we copy and describe from you.

It is indeed their interest who endeavour the subversion of governments to discourage poets and historians, for the best which can happen to them is to be forgotten; but such who under kings are the fathers of their country, and by a just and prudent ordering of affairs preserve it, have the same reason to cherish the chronicles of their actions as they have to lay up in safety the deeds and evidences of their estates; for such records are their undoubted titles to the love and reverence of after ages. Your Lordship's administration has already taken up a considerable part of the English annals, and many of its most happy years are owing to it. His Majesty, the most knowing judge of men, and the best master, has acknowledged the ease and benefit he receives in the incomes of his Treasury, which you found not only disordered but exhausted. All things were in the confusion of a chaos, without form or method, if not reduced beyond it, even to annihilation; so that you had not only to separate the jarring elements, but (if that boldness of expression might be allowed me) to create them. Your enemies had so embroiled the management of your office that they looked on your advancement as the instrument of your ruin; and as if the clogging of the revenue and the confusion of accounts which you found in your entrance were not sufficient, they added their own weight of malice to the public calamity by forestalling the credit which should cure it: your friends, on the other side, were only capable of pitying but not of aiding you; no farther help or counsel was remaining to you but what was founded on yourself; and that indeed was your security; for your diligence, your constancy, and your prudence, wrought more surely within when they were not disturbed by any outward motion. The highest virtue is best to be trusted with itself, for assistance only can be given by a genius superiour to that which it assists; and it is the noblest kind of debt when we are only obliged to God and nature. This then, my Lord, is your just commendation, that you have wrought out yourself a way to glory by those very means that were designed for your

destruction; you have not only restored but advanced the revenues of your master without grievance to the subject; and as if that were little, yet the debts of the Exchequer, which lay heaviest both on the Crown and on private persons, have by your conduct been established in a certainty of satisfaction; an action so much the more great and honourable because the case was without the ordinary relief of laws, above the hopes of the afflicted, and beyond the narrowness of the Treasury to redress, had it been managed by a less able hand. It is certainly the happiest and most unenvied part of all your fortune to do good to many while you do injury to none; to receive at once the prayers of the subject and the praises of the prince; and by the care of your conduct to give him means of exerting the chiefest (if any be the chiefest) of his royal virtues, his distributive justice to the deserving, and his bounty and compassion to the wanting. The disposition of princes towards their people cannot better be discovered than in the choice of their ministers, who, like the animal spirits betwixt the soul and body, participate somewhat of both natures, and make the communication which is betwixt them. A king who is just and moderate in his nature, who rules according to the laws, whom God made happy by forming the temper of his soul to the constitution of his government, and who makes us happy by assuming over us no other sovereignty than that wherein our welfare and liberty consists; a prince, I say, of so excellent a character, and so suitable to the wishes of all good men, could not better have conveyed himself into his people's apprehensions than in your Lordship's person, who so lively expresses the same virtues, that you seem not so much a copy as an emanation of him. Moderation is doubtless an establishment of greatness; but there is a steadiness of temper which is likewise requisite in a minister of state; so equal a mixture of both virtues that he may stand like an isthmus betwixt the two encroaching seas of arbitrary power and lawless anarchy. The undertaking would be difficult to any but an extraordinary genius to stand at the line and to divide the limits; to pay what is due to the great representative of the nation, and neither to inhanche nor to yield up the undoubted prerogatives of the crown. These, my Lord, are the proper virtues of a noble Englishman, as indeed they are properly English virtues, no people in the world being capable of using them; but we who have the happiness to be born under so equal and so wellpois'd a government, a government which has all the advantages of liberty beyond a commonwealth, and all the marks of kingly sovereignty without the danger of a tyranny. Both my nature as I am an Englishman, and my reason as I am a man, have bred in me a loathing to that specious name of a Republick, that mock appearance of a liberty, where all who have not part in the government are slaves; and slaves they are of a viler note than such as are subjects to an absolute dominion: for no Christian monarchy is so absolute but it is circumscribed with laws; but when the executive power is in the lawmakers there is no farther check upon them, and the people must suffer without a remedy, because they are oppressed by their representatives. If I must serve, the number of my masters, who were born my equals, would but add to the ignominy of my bondage. The nature of our government, above

all other, is exactly suited both to the situation of our country and the temper of the natives, an island being more proper for commerce and for defence than for extending its dominions on the continent; for what the valour of its inhabitants might gain, by reason of its remoteness and the casualties of the seas it could not so easily preserve; and therefore neither the arbitrary power of one in a monarchy, nor of many in a commonwealth, could make us greater than we are. It is true that vaster and more frequent taxes might be gathered when the consent of the people was not asked or needed, but this were only by conquering abroad to be poor at home; and the examples of our neighbours teach us that they are not always the happiest subjects whose kings extend their dominions farthest. Since, therefore, we cannot win by an offensive war, at least a land-war, the model of our government seems naturally contrived for the defensive part; and the consent of a people is easily obtained to contribute to that power which must protect it. *Felices nimium bona si sua norint, Angligenae!* And yet there are not wanting malcontents among us who, surfeiting themselves on too much happiness, would persuade the people that they might be happier by a change. 'Twas indeed the policy of their old forefather, when himself was fallen from the station of glory, to seduce mankind into the same rebellion with him, by telling him he might yet be freer than he was, that is, more free than his nature would allow, or (if I may so say), than God could make him. We have already all the liberty which freeborn subjects can enjoy, and all beyond it is but licence. But if it be liberty of conscience which they pretend, the moderation of our church is such, that its practice extends not to the severity of persecution, and its discipline is withal so easy, that it allows more freedom to dissenters than any of the sects would allow to it. In the mean-time what right can be pretended by these men to attempt innovations in church or state? Who made them the trustees, or (to speak a little nearer their own language) the keepers, of the liberty of England? If their call be extraordinary let them convince us by working miracles; for ordinary vocation they can have none to disturb the government under which they were born, and which protects them. He who has often changed his party, and always has made his interest the rule of it, gives little evidence of his sincerity for the publick good: it is manifest he changes but for himself, and takes the people for tools to work his fortune; yet the experience of all ages might let him know that they who trouble the waters first have seldom the benefit of the fishing; as they who began the late rebellion enjoyed not the fruit of their undertaking, but were crushed themselves by the usurpation of their own instrument. Neither is it enough for them to answer that they only intend a reformation of the government but not the subversion of it; on such pretences all insurrections have been founded; 'tis striking at the root of power, which is obedience. Every remonstrance of private men has the seed of treason in it; and discourses which are couched in ambiguous terms are therefore the more dangerous, because they do all the mischief of open sedition, yet are safe from the punishment of the laws. These, my Lord, are considerations which I should not pass so lightly over.

had I room to manage them as they deserve, for no man can be so inconsiderable in a nation as not to have a share in the welfare of it; and if he be a true Englishman he must at the same time be fired with indignation, and revenge himself as he can on the disturbers of his country. And to whom could I more fitly apply myself than to your Lordship, who have not only an inborn but an hereditary loyalty? The memorable constancy and sufferings of your father, almost to the ruin of his estate, for the royal cause, were an earnest of that which such a parent and such an institution would produce in the person of a son. But so unhappy an occasion of manifesting your own zeal in suffering for his present Majesty the providence of God, and the prudence of your administration, will I hope prevent; that as your father's fortune waited on the unhappiness of his sovereign, so your own may participate of the better fate which attends his son. The relation which you have by alliance to the noble family of your lady serves to confirm to you both this happy augury; for what can deserve a greater place in the English Chronicle than the loyalty and courage, the actions and death, of the general of an army fighting for his prince and country? The honour and gallantry of the Earl of Lindsey is so illustrious a subject that it is fit to adorn an heroick poem; for he was the protomartyr of the cause, and the type of his unfortunate royal master.

Yet after all, my Lord, if I may speak my thoughts you are rather happy to us than to yourself; for the multiplicity, the cares, and the vexations of your employment, have betrayed you from yourself, and given you up into the possession of the publick. You are robbed of your privacy and friends, and scarce any hour of your life you can call your own. Those who envy your fortune, if they wanted not good-nature, might more justly pity it; and when they see you watched by a crowd of suitors, whose importunity it is impossible to avoid, would conclude with reason that you have lost much more in true content than you have gained by dignity; and that a private gentleman is better attended by a single servant than your Lordship with so clamorous a train. Pardon me, my Lord, if I speak like a philosopher on this subject; the fortune which makes a man uneasy cannot make him happy; and a wise man must think himself uneasy when few of his actions are in his choice.

This last consideration has brought me to another, and a very seasonable one for your relief; which is, that while I pity your want of leisure I have impertinently detained you so long a time. I have put off my own business, which was my Dedication, till it is so late that I am now ashamed to begin it; and therefore I will say nothing of the Poem which I present to you, because I know not if you are like to have an hour which, with a good conscience, you may throw away in perusing it; and for the Author, I have only to beg the continuance of your protection to him, who is,

My Lord,

your Lordship's most obliged,
most humble, and most
obedient servant.

JOHN DRYDEN.

PREFACE.

THE death of Antony and Cleopatra is a subject which has been treated by the greatest wits of our nation after Shakespeare, and by all so variously, that their example has given me the confidence to try myself in this bow of Ulysses amongst the crowd of suitors, and withal to take my own measures in aiming at the mark. I doubt not but the same motive has prevailed with all of us in this attempt, I mean the excellency of the moral; for the chief persons represented were famous patterns of unlawful love, and their end accordingly was unfortunate. All reasonable men have long since concluded that the hero of the Poem ought not to be a character of perfect virtue, for then he could not without injustice be made unhappy, nor yet altogether wicked, because he could not then be pitied: I have therefore steered the middle course, and have drawn the character of Antony as favourably as Plutarch, Appian, and Dion Cassius, would give me leave. The like I have observed in Cleopatra. That which is wanting to work up the pity to a greater height was not afforded me by the story; for the crimes of love, which they both committed, were not occasioned by any necessity or fatal ignorance, but were wholly voluntary, since our passions are or ought to be within our power. The fabrick of the Play is regular enough as to the inferiour parts of it, and the unities of time, place, and action, more exactly observed than perhaps the English theatre requires; particularly the action is so much one that it is the only of the kind without episode or underplot, every scene in the tragedy conducing to the main design, and every act concluding with a turn of it. The greatest error in the contrivance seems to be in the person of Octavia; for though I might use the privilege of a poet to introduce her into Alexandria, yet I had not enough considered that the compassion she moved to herself and children was destructive to that which I reserved for Antony and Cleopatra, whose mutual love being founded upon vice must lessen the favour of the audience to them, when virtue and innocence were oppressed by it. And though I justified Antony in some measure, by making Octavia's departure to proceed wholly from herself, yet the force of the first machine still remained; and the dividing of pity, like the cutting of a river into many channels, abated the strength of the natural stream. But this is an objection which none of my criticks have urged against me, and therefore I might have let it pass if I could have resolved to have been partial to myself. The faults my enemies have found are rather cavils concerning little and not essential decencies, which a master of the ceremonies may decide betwixt us. The French poets, I confess, are strict observers of these punctilios; they would not, for example, have suffered Cleopatra and Octavia to have met, or if they had met, there must only have passed betwixt them some cold civilities, but no eagerness of repartee, for fear of offending against the greatness of their characters and the modesty of their sex. This objection I foresaw, and at the same time contemned; for I judged it both natural and probable that Octavia, proud of her new-gained conquest, would search out Cleopatra to triumph over her, and that Cleopatra, thus attacked, was not

of a spirit to shun the encounter; and 'tis not unlikely that two exasperated rivals should use such satire as I have put into their mouths; for after all, though the one were a Roman and the other a queen they were both women. 'Tis true, some actions, though natural, are not fit to be represented, and broad obscenities in words ought in good manners to be avoided; expressions, therefore, are a modest clothing of our thoughts, as breeches and petticoats are of our bodies. If I have kept myself within the bounds of modesty all beyond it is but nicety and affectation, which is no more but modesty depraved into a vice: they betray themselves who are too quick of apprehension in such cases, and leave all reasonable men to imagine worse of them than of the poet.

Honest Montaigne goes yet farther: *Nous ne sommes que ceremonie; la ceremonie nous emporte, et laissons la substance des choses. Nous nous tenons aux branches et abandonnons le trone et le corps. Nous avons appris aux dames de rougir, oyans seulement nommer ce qu'elles ne craignent aucunement a faire: nous n'osons appeller a droit nos membres, et ne craignons pas de les employer a toute sorte de debauchee. La ceremonie nous defend d'exprimer par paroles les choses licites et naturelles, et nous l'en croyons; la raison nous defend de n'en faire point d'illicites et mauvaises, et personne ne l'en croit.* My comfort is, that by this opinion my enemies are but sucking criticks, who would fain be nibbling ere their teeth are come.

Yet in this nicety of manners does the excellency of French poetry consist; their heroes are the most civil people breathing; but their goodbreeding seldom extends to a word of sense: all their wit is in their ceremony: they want the genius which animates our stage, and therefore 'tis but necessary when they cannot please that they should take care not to offend. But as the civilest man in the company is commonly the dullest, so these authors, while they are afraid to make you laugh or cry, out of pure good manners make you sleep. They are so careful not to exasperate a critick that they never leave him any work; so busy with the broom, and make so clean a riddance, that there is little left either for censure or for praise; for no part of a poem is worth our discommending where the whole is insipid; as when we have once tasted of palled wine we stay not to examine it glass by glass. But while they affect to shine in trifles they are often careless in essentials: thus their Hippolytus is so scrupulous in point of decency, that he will rather expose himself to death than accuse his stepmother to his father; and my criticks I am sure will commend him for it; but we of grosser apprehensions are apt to think that this excess of generosity is not practicable but with fools and madmen. This was good manners with a vengeance, and the audience is like to be much concerned at the misfortunes of this admirable hero: but take Hippolytus out of his poetick fit, and I suppose he would think it a wiser part to set the saddle on the right horse, and chuse rather to live with the reputation of a plain-spoken honest man than to die with the infamy of an incestuous villain. In the mean-time we may take notice that where the poet ought to have preserved the character as it was delivered to us by Antiquity, when he should have given us the picture of a rough young man of the Amazonian strain, a jolly hunt-

man, and both by his profession and his early rising a mortal enemy to love, he has chosen to give him the turn of gallantry, sent him to travel from Athens to Paris, taught him to make love, and transformed the Hippolytus of Euripides into Monsieur Hippolyte. I should not have troubled myself thus far with French poets, but that I find our Chedreux criticks wholly form their judgments by them. But for my part I desire to be tried by the laws of my own country, for it seems unjust to me that the French should prescribe here till they have conquered. Our little sonneteers who follow them have too narrow souls to judge of poetry. Poets themselves are the most proper though I conclude not the only criticks. But till some genius as universal as Aristotle shall arise, who can penetrate into all arts and sciences without the practice of them, I shall think it reasonable that the judgment of an artificer in his own art should be preferable to the opinion of another man, at least where he is not bribed by interest or prejudiced by malice; and this I suppose is manifest by plain induction; for, first, the crowd cannot be presumed to have more than a gross instinct of what pleases or displeases them: every man will grant me this; but then by a particular kindness to himself he draws his own stake first, and will be distinguished from the multitude, of which other men may think him one. But if I come closer to those who are allowed for witty men, either by the advantage of their quality or by common fame, and affirm that neither are they qualified to decide sovereignly concerning poetry, I shall yet have a strong party of my opinion; for most of them severally will exclude the rest either from the number of witty men, or at least of able judges. But here again they are all indulgent to themselves; and every one who believes himself a wit, that is, every man, will pretend at the same time to a right of judging. But to press it yet farther, there are many witty men but few poets; neither have all poets a taste of tragedy: and this is the rock on which they are daily splitting. Poetry, which is a picture of nature, must generally please; but 'tis not to be understood that all parts of it must please every man; therefore is not tragedy to be judged by a witty man, whose taste is only confined to comedy: nor is every man who loves tragedy a sufficient judge of it; he must understand the excellencies of it too, or he will only prove a blind admirer, not a critick. From hence it comes that so many satires on poets and censures of their writings fly abroad. Men of pleasant conversation, (at least esteemed so) and endued with a trifling kind of fancy, perhaps helped out with some smattering of Latin, are ambitious to distinguish themselves from the herd of gentlemen by their poetry;

Rarus enim sēme sensus communis in illa
Fortuna.

And is not this a wretched affectation not to be contented with what Fortune has done for them, and sit down quietly with their estates, but they must call their wits in question, and needlessly expose their nakedness to publick view, not considering that they are not to expect the same approbation from sober men which they have found from their flatterers after the third bottle? If a little glittering in discourse has passed them on us for witty men, where was the

necessity of undeceiving the world? Would a man who has an ill title to an estate, but yet is in possession of it, would he bring it of his own accord to be tried at Westminster? We who write, if we want the talent, yet have the excuse that we do it for a poor subsistence; but what can be urged in their defence who, not having the vocation of poverty to scribble, out of mere wantonness take pains to make themselves ridiculous? Horace was certainly in the right where he said, That no man is satisfied with his own condition. A poet is not pleased because he is not rich, and the rich are discontented because the poets will not admit them of their number. Thus the case is hard with writers; if they succeed not they must starve; and if they do some malicious satire is prepared to level them for daring to please without their leave. But while they are so eager to destroy the fame of others their ambition is manifest in their concernment; some poem of their own is to be produced, and the slaves are to be laid flat with their faces on the ground that the monarch may appear in the greater majesty.

Dionysius and Nero had the same longings, but with all their power they could never bring their business well about. It is true they proclaimed themselves poets by sound of trumpet, and poets they were upon pain of death to any man who durst call them otherwise. The audience had a fine time on't you may imagine; they sat in a bodily fear, and looked as demurely as they could; for 't was a hanging matter to laugh unseasonably; and the tyrants were suspicious, as they had reason, that their subjects had them in the wind; so every man in his own defence set as good a face upon the business as he could: it was known beforehand that the monarchs were to be crowned laureats, but when the show was over, and an honest man was suffered to depart quietly, he took out his laughter which he had stifled, with a firm resolution never more to see an emperor's play though he had been ten years a-making it. In the mean-time the true poets were they who made the best markets, for they had wit enough to yield the prize with a good grace, and not contend with him who had thirty legions: they were sure to be rewarded if they confessed themselves bad writers, and that was somewhat better than to be martyrs for their reputation. Lucan's example was enough to teach them manners; and after he was put to death for overcoming Nero the emperor carried it, without dispute, for the best poet in his dominions: no man was ambitious of that grinning honour, for if he heard the malicious trumpeter proclaiming his name before his betters he knew there was but one way with him. Mecænas took another course, and we know he was more than a great man, for he was witty too; but finding himself far gone in poetry, which Seneca assures us was not his talent, he thought it his best way to be well with Virgil and with Horace, that at least he might be a poet at the second hand; and we see how happily it has succeeded with him, for his own bad poetry is forgotten, and their panegyrics of him still remain. But they who should be our patrons are for no such expensive ways to fame; they have much of the poetry of Mecænas but little of his liberality. They are for procuring themselves reputation in the persons of their successors, (for such is every man who has any part

of their soul and fire, though in a less degree.) Some of their little Zanies yet go further, for they are persecutors even of Horace himself, as far as they are able, by their ignorant and vile imitations of him, by making an unjust use of his authority, and turning his artillery against his friends. But how would he disdain to be copied by such hands! I dare answer for him he would be more uneasy in their company than he was with Crispinus their forefather in the holy way, and would no more have allowed them a place among the criticks than he would Demetrius the mimic and Tigellius the buffoon;

Demetri, teque Tigelli,
Discipulorum inter jubeo plorare cathedras.

With what scorn would he look down on such miserable translators, who make doggrel of his Latin, mistake his meaning, misapply his censures, and often contradict their own? He is fixed as a landmark to set out the bounds of poetry;

Saxum, antiquum ingens
Limes agro positus litem ut discerneret arvis.

But other arms than theirs, and other sinews, are required to raise the weight of such an author, and when they would toss him against their enemies,

Genus labant, gelidus concrevit frigore sanguis,
Tum lapis ipse, viri vacuum per inane volutus
Nec spatium evasit totum, nec pertulit ictum.

For my part, I would wish no other revenge either for myself or the rest of the poets from this rhyming judge of the twelpenny gallery, this legitimate son of Sternhold, than that he would subscribe his name to his censure, or (not to tax him beyond his learning) set his mark: for should he own himself publickly, and come from behind the lion's skin, they whom he condemns would be thankful to him, they whom he praises would chuse to be condemned; and the magistrates whom he has elected would modestly withdraw from their employment to avoid the scandal of his nomination. The sharpness of his satire, next to himself, falls most heavily on his friends, and they ought never to forgive him for commending them perpetually the wrong way, and sometimes by contraries. If he have a friend whose hastiness in writing is his greatest fault, Horace would have taught him to have minced the matter, and to have called it readiness of thought and a flowing fancy; for friendship will allow a man to christen an imperfection by the name of some neighbour virtue:

Vellem in amicitia sic erraremus; et isti
Errori, nomen virtus posuisset honestum.

But he would never have allowed him to have called a slow man hasty, or a hasty writer a slow drudge, as Juvenal explains it;

Canibus pigris scabieque vetusta
Levibus, et siccae lamentibus ora lucernæ
Nomen erit, pardus, tigris, leo, si quid adhuc est
Quod fremit in terris violentius.

Yet Lucretius laughs at a foolish lover even for excusing the imperfections of his mistress;

Nigra melichros est, immunda et fetida akosma
Salva loqui non quit, traxitque; muta pudens est, &c.

But to drive it *ad Æthiopem cygnum* is not to be endured. I leave him to interpret this by the benefit of his French version on the other side, and without farther considering him than I have the rest of my illiterate censors, whom I have disdained to answer because they are not qualified for judges. It remains that I acquaint the reader that I have endeavoured in this Play to follow the practice of the Ancients, who, as Mr. Rymer has judiciously observed, are and ought to be our masters. Horace likewise gives it for a rule in his Art of Poetry,

— Vos exemplaria Græca
Nocturna versate manu, versate diurna.

Yet though their models are regular they are too little for English tragedy, which requires to be built in a larger compass. I could give an instance in the *Oedipus Tyrannus*, which was the masterpiece of Sophocles; but I reserve it for a more fit occasion, which I hope to have hereafter. In my style I have professed to imitate the divine Shakespeare, which that I might perform more freely I have disincumbered myself from rhyme; not that I condemn my former way, but that this is more proper to my present purpose. I hope I need not to explain myself that I have not copied my author servilely. Words and phrases must of necessity receive a change in succeeding ages; but it is almost a miracle that much of his language remains so pure, and that he who began dramattick poetry amongst us, untaught by any, and, as Ben Johnson tells us, without learning, should by the force of his own genius perform so much, that in a manner he has left no praise for any who come after him. The occasion is fair, and the subject would be pleasant to handle the difference of styles betwixt him and Fletcher, and wherein and how far they are both to be imitated. But since I must not be over-confident of my own performance after him it will be prudence in me to be silent: yet I hope I may affirm, and without vanity, that by imitating him I have excelled myself throughout the Play, and particularly that I prefer the scene betwixt Antony and Ventidius, in the first, act to any thing which I have written in this kind.

PROLOGUE.

WHAT flocks of criticks hover here to-day,
 As vultures wait on armies for their prey,
 All gaping for the carcass of a play!
 With croaking notes they bode some dire event,
 And follow dying poets by the scent.
 Ours gives himself for gone; you've watch'd your time;
 He fights this day unarm'd, without his rhyme,
 And brings a tale which often has been told,
 As sad as Dido's and almost as old.

His hero, whom you wits his bully call,
 Bates of his mettle, and scarce rants at all:
 He's somewhat lewd, but a wellmeaning mind;
 Weeps much, fights little, but is wondrous kind:
 In sport, a pattern and companion fit
 For all the keeping tonies of the pit:
 I cou'd name more; a wife and mistress too,
 Both (to be plain) too good for most of you;
 The wife wellnatur'd and the mistress true.

Now, Poets, if your fame has been his care,
 Allow him all the candour you can spare.
 A brave man scorns to quarrel once a-day,
 Like Hector's, in at ev'ry petty fray.
 Let those find fault whose wit's so very small
 They've need to show that they can think at all:
 Errours like straws upon the surface flow;
 He who would search for pearls must dive below:
 Fops may have leave to level all they can,
 As pigmies would be glad to lop a man.
 Half-wits are fleas, so little and so light,
 We scarce could know they live but that they bite.
 But as the rich, when tir'd with daily feasts,
 For change become their next poor tenant's guests,
 Drink hearty draughts of ale from plain brown bowels,
 And snatch the homely rasber from the coals;
 So you, retiring from much better cheer,
 For once may venture to do penance here:
 And since that plenteous autumn now is past,
 Whose grapes and peaches have indulg'd your taste,
 Take in good part from our poor Poet's board
 Such rivell'd fruits as winter can afford.

Dramatis Personae.

MEN.

	<i>Drury-Lane.</i>	<i>Covent-Garden.</i>
MARC ANTONY,	Mr. Smith.	Mr. Barry.
VENTIDIUS, his general,	Mr. Palmer.	Mr. Clarke.
DOLABELLA, his friend,	Mr. Brereton.	Mr. Aickin.
ALEXAS, the Queen's eunuch,	} Mr. Whitfield.	Mr. Young.
SERAPION, priest of Isis,		Mr. Bates.
ROMANS,	} Mr. Griffiths.	Mr. L'Estrange.
		Mr. Thompson.

WOMEN.

CLEOPATRA, Queen of Egypt,	} Miss Younge.	Mrs. Hartley.
OCTAVIA, Antony's wife,		Mrs. Mattocks.
CHARMION, } Cleopatra's	} Mrs. Johnston.	Miss Simpson.
IRAS, } maids.		Mrs. Hippisley.
Antony's two little daughters.		

SCENE ALEXANDRIA.

ALL FOR LOVE;

OR, THE WORLD WELL LOST.

ACT I.

SCENE, *the temple of Isis.*

SERAPION, MYRIS, *priests of Isis, discovered.*

SERAPION.

PORTENTS and prodigies are grown so frequent
That they have lost their name. Our fruitful Nile
Flow'd, ere the wonted season, with a torrent
So unexpected and so wondrous fierce
That the wild deluge overtook the haste
Ev'n of the hinds that watch'd it. Men and beasts
Were borne above the tops of trees that grew
On th' utmost margin of the watermark:
Then with so swift an ebb the flood drove backward,
It slid from underneath the scaly herd:
Here monstrous phocæ panted on the shore,
Forfaken dolphins there with their broad tails
Lay lashing the departing waves, hard by 'em
Seahorses flound'ring in the slimy mud
Toss'd up their heads and dash'd the ooze about 'em.

Enter ALEXAS behind them.

Myr. Avert these omens Heav'n!

Ser. Last night, between the hours of twelve and one,
In a lone aisle o' the temple while I walk'd,
A whirlwind rose that with a violent blast
Shook all the dome; the doors around me clapt;
The iron wicket that defends the vault
Where the long race of Ptolemies is laid
Burst open, and disclos'd the mighty dead:

B ij

From out each monument, in order plac'd,
 An armed ghost starts up; the boy-king last
 Rear'd his inglorious head: a peal of groans
 Then follow'd, and a lamentable voice
 Cry'd Egypt is no more. My blood ran back,
 My shaking knees against each other knock'd,
 On the cold pavement down I fell entranc'd,
 And so unfinish'd left the horrid scene?

Alex. And dreamt you this, or did invent the story
 [Shewing himself.]

To frighten our Egyptian boys withal,
 And train 'em up betimes in fear of priesthood?

Ser. My lord, I saw you not,
 Nor meant my words should reach your ears; but what
 I utter'd was most true.

Alex. A foolish dream,
 Bred from the fumes of indigested feasts
 And holy luxury.

Ser. I know my duty:
 This goes no farther.

Alex. 'Tis not fit it should,
 Nor would the times now bear it were it true.
 All southern from yon' hills the Roman camp
 Hangs o'er us black and threat'ning, like a storm
 Just breaking on our heads.

Ser. "Our faint Egyptians pray for Antony,
 "But in their servile hearts they own Octavius.

Myr. "Why then does Antony dream out his hours,
 "And tempts not Fortune for a noble day,
 "Which might redeem what Actium lost?

Alex. "He thinks 'tis past recovery,

Ser. "Yet the foe
 "Seems not to press the siege.

Alex. "Oh, there's the wonder.
 "Mecænas and Agrippa, who can most
 "With Cæsar, are his foes. His wife Octavia,
 "Driv'n from his house, solicits her revenge;
 "And Dolabella, who was once his friend,
 "Upon some private grudge now seeks his ruin;
 "Yet still war seems on either side to sleep."

Ser. 'Tis strange that Antony for some days | a t
 Has not beheld the face of Cleopatra,

But here in Isis' temple lives retir'd,
And makes his heart a prey to black despair.

Alex. 'Tis true; and we much fear he hopes by absence
To cure his mind of love,

Ser. "If he be vanquish'd
"Or make his peace Egypt is doom'd to be
"A Roman province, and our plenteous harvests
"Must then redeem the scarceness of their soil—
"While Antony stood firm our Alexandria
"Rivall'd proud Rome, (Dominion's other seat)
"And Fortune striding, like a vast Colossus,
"Could fix an equal foot of empire here.

Alex. "Had I my wish these tyrants of all nature,
"Who lord it o'er mankind, should perish, perish,
"Each by the other's sword; but since our will
"Is lamely follow'd by our pow'r we must
"Depend on one, with him to rise or fall.

Ser. How stands the Queen affected?

Alex. Oh, she dotes,
She dotes, Serapion, on this vanquish'd man,
And winds herself about his mighty ruins,
Whom would she yet forsake, yet yield him up,
This hunted prey, to his pursuer's hands,
She might preserve us all: but 'tis in vain——
This changes my designs, this blasts my counsels,
And makes me use all means to keep him here
Whom I could wish divided from her arms—
Far as the earth's deep centre. Well, you know
The state of things: no more of your ill omens
And black prognosticks; labour to confirm
The people's hearts.

Enter VENTIDIUS, talking aside with a gentleman of Antony's.

Ser. These Romans will o'erhear us.
But who's that stranger? by his warlike port,
His fierce demeanour, and erected look,
He's of no vulgar note.

Alex. Oh, 'tis Ventidius,
Our Emperour's great Lieutenant in the East,
Who first shew'd Rome that Parthia could be conquer'd.
When Antony return'd from Syria last
He left this man to guard the Roman frontiers.

Ser. You seem to know him well.

Alex. Too well. I saw him in Cilicia first
When Cleopatra there met Antony;
A mortal foe he was to us and Egypt.
But let me witness to the worth I hate;
A braver Roman never drew a sword:
Firm to his prince, but as a friend, not slave:
He ne'er was of his pleasures, but presides
O'er all his cooler hours and morning counsels:
In short, the plainness, fierceness, rugged virtue
Of an old true stamp'd Roman lives in him.
His coming bodes I know not what of ill
To our affairs. Withdraw to mark him better,
And I'll acquaint you why I fought you here,
And what's our present work.

[*They withdraw to a corner of the stage, and Ventidius with the other comes forward to the front.*]

Vent. Not see him say you?

I say I must and will.

Gent. He has commanded

On pain of death none should approach his presence.

Vent. I bring him news will raise his drooping spirits,
Give him new life.

Gent. He sees not Cleopatra.

Vent. Would he had never seen her.

Gent. He eats not, drinks not, sleeps not, has no use
Of any thing but thought; or if he talks
'Tis to himself, and then 'tis perfect raving;
Then he defies the world, and bids it pass.
Sometimes he gnaws his lip, and curses loud
The boy Octavius; then he draws his mouth
Into a scornful smile, and cries, Take all,
The world's not worth my care.

Vent. Just, just his nature.

Virtue's his path, but sometimes 'tis too narrow
For his vast soul, and then he starts out wide,
And bounds into a vice that bears him far
From his first course, and plunges him in ills:
"But when his danger makes him find his fault,
"Quick to observe, and full of sharp remorse,
"He censures eagerly his own misdeeds,
"Judging himself with malice to himself,

" And not forgiving what as man he did,
 " Because his other parts are more than man."
 He must not thus be lost.

[Alexas and the priests come forward.]

Alex. You have your full instructions; now advance;
 Proclaim your orders loudly.

Ser. Romans! Egyptians! hear the Queen's command.
 Thus Cleopatra bids: let labour cease;
 To pomp and triumphs give this happy day
 That gave the world a lord; 'tis Antony's.
 Live Antony, and Cleopatra live!
 Be this the gen'ral voice sent up to Heav'n,
 And ev'ry publick place repeat this echo.

Vent. Fine pageantry!

[Aside.]

Ser. Set out before your doors
 The images of all your sleeping fathers
 With laurels crown'd, with laurels wreath your posts,
 And strow with flow'rs the pavement; let the priest
 Do present sacrifice, pour out the wine,
 And call the gods to join with you in gladness.

Vent. Curse on the tongue that bids this gen'ral joy!
 Can they be friends of Antony who revel
 When Antony's in danger? Hide, for shame,
 You Romans, your great grandfires' images,
 For fear their souls should animate their marbles
 To blush at their degenerate progeny.

Alex. A love which knows no bounds to Antony
 Would mark the day with honours; when all Heav'n
 Labour'd for him, when each propitious star
 Stood wakeful in his orb to watch that hour
 And shed his better influence, her own birthday
 Our Queen neglected, like a vulgar fate
 That pass'd obscurely by.

Vent. Would it had slept
 Divided far from his, till some remote
 And future age had call'd it out to ruin
 Some other prince, not him.

Alex. Your Emperour,
 Tho' grown unkind, would be more gentle than
 T' upbraid my Queen for loving him too well.

Vent. " Does the mute sacrifice upbraid the priest?
 " He knows him not his executioner.

" Oh ! she has deck'd his ruin with her love,
 " Led him in golden bands to gaudy slaughter,
 " And made perdition pleasing : she has left him
 " The blank of what he was."

I tell thee eunuch, she has quite unmann'd him :
 Can any Roman see and know him now,
 Thus alter'd from the lord of half mankind,
 Unbent, unfinew'd, made a woman's toy,
 Shrunk from the vast extent of all his honours,
 And cramp'd within a corner of the world ?
 Oh Antony !

Thou bravest soldier and thou best of friends !
 Bounteous as Nature next to Nature's God !
 Couldst thou but make new worlds so wouldst thou give 'em,
 As bounty were thy being. Rough in battle
 As the first Romans when they went to war,
 Yet after victory more pitiful
 Than all their praying virgins left at home !

Alex. Would you could add to those more shining virtues
 His truth to her who loves him.

Vent. Would I could not.

But wherefore waste I precious hours with thee ?
 Thou art her darling mischief, her chief engine,
 Antony's other Fate. Go tell thy Queen
 Ventidius is arriv'd to end her charms.
 Let your Egyptian timbrels play alone,
 Nor mix effeminate sounds with Roman trumpets.
 You dare not fight for Antony ; go pray,
 And keep your coward's holyday in temples.

[*Exeunt Alex. Scap.*]

Reenter the Gentleman of Marc Antony.

Second Gent. The Emperour approaches, and commands
 On pain of death that none presume to stay.

First Gent. I dare not disobey him. [*Going out with the other.*]

Vent. Well, I dare ;

But I'll observe him first unseen, and find
 Which way his humour drives : the rest I'll venture.

[*Withdraws.*]

Enter ANTONY, walking with a disturbed motion before he speaks.

Ant. They tell me 't is my birthday, and I'll keep it
 With double pomp of sadness :

'Tis what the day deserves which gave me breath.
Why was I rais'd the meteor of the world,
Hung in the skies, and blazing as I travell'd;
Till all my fires were spent, and then cast downward
To be trod out by Cæsar?

Vent. aside.] On my soul

'Tis mournful, wondrous mournful!

Ant. Count thy gains

Now Antony; wouldst thou be born for this?

Glutton of fortune, thy devouring youth

Has starv'd thy wanting age.

Vent. aside.] How sorrow shakes him!

So now the tempest tears him up by the roots,

And on the ground extends the noble ruin.

Ant. having thrown himself down.] Lie there, thou shadow
of an emperour;

The place thou preffest on thy mother earth

Is all thy empire now: now it contains thee;

Some few days hence, and then 't will be too large,

When thou'rt contracted in thy narrow urn,

Shrunk to a few cold ashes; then Octavia,

(For Cleopatra will not live to see it)

Octavia then will have thee all her own,

And bear thee in her widow'd hand to Cæsar;

"Cæsar will weep, the crocodile will weep,

"To see his rival of the universe

"Lie still and peaceful there." I'll think no more on't.

Give me some musick; look that it be sad.

I'll sooth my melancholy till I swell,

And burst myself with sighing——

[*Soft musick.*]

'Tis somewhat to my humour. Stay, I fancy

I'm now turn'd wild, a commoner of nature;

Of all forsaken, and forsaking all,

Live in a shady forest's sylvan scene,

Stretch'd at my length beneath some blasted oak,

I lean my head upon the mossy bark,

And look just of a piece as I grew from it:

My uncomb'd locks, matted like mistletoe,

Hang o'er my hoary face; a murm'ring brook

Runs at my foot——

Vent. "Methinks I fancy

"Myself there too."

Ant. "The herd come jumping by me,
 "And fearless quench their thirst while I look on,
 "And take me for their fellow-citizen.
 "More of this image, more; it lulls my thoughts."

[*Soft musick again.*]

Vent. I must disturb him: I can hold no longer.

[*Stands before him.*]

Ant. [starting up.] Art thou Ventidius?

Vent. Are you Antony?

I'm liker what I was than you to him
 I left you last.

Ant. "I'm angry.

Vent. "So am I."

Ant. I would be private. Leave me.

Vent. Sir, I love you,

And therefore will not leave you.

Ant. Will not leave me!

Where have you learnt that answer? Who am I?

Vent. My Emperour; the man I love next Heav'n:

If I said more I think 'twere scarce a sin:

You're all that's good and godlike.

Ant. All that's wretched.

You will not leave me then?

Vent. 'Twas too presuming

To say I would not; but I dare not leave you;

And 'tis unkind in you to chide me hence

So soon when I so far have come to see you.

Ant. Now thou hast seen me art thou satisfy'd?

For if a friend thou hast beheld enough,

And if a foe too much.

Vent. Look, Emperour, this is no common dew:

[*Weeping*]

I have not wept this forty years; but now

My mother comes afresh into my eyes;

I cannot help her softness.

Ant. By Heav'n he weeps, poor good old man, he weeps!

"The big round drops course one another down

"The furrows of his cheeks. Stop 'em Ventidius,

"Or I shall blush to death; they set my shame

"That caus'd 'em full before me.

Vent. "I'll do my best."

Ant. Sure there's contagion in the tears of friends;

See, I have caught it too. Believe me 't is not
For my own griefs but thine——Nay, father——

Vent. Emperour.

Ant. Emperour! why that 's the style of victory;
The conq'ring soldier, red with unfelt wounds,
Salutes his gen'ral so; but never more
Shall that sound reach my ears.

Vent. I warrant you.

Ant. Actium, Actium! Oh——

Vent. It sits too near you.

Ant. Here, here it lies, a lump of lead by day,
And in my short distracted nightly slumbers
The hag that rides my dreams——

Vent. Out with it; give it vent.

Ant. Urge not my shame——

I lost a battle.

Vent. So has Julius done.

Ant. Thou favour'st me, and speak'st not half thou
For Julius fought it out and lost it fairly; [think'st;
But Antony——

Vent. Nay, stop not.

Ant. Antony

(Well, thou wilt have it) like a coward fled,
Fled while his soldiers fought; fled first Ventidius.
Thou long'st to curse me, and I give thee leave;
“I know thou cam'st prepar'd to rail.

Vent. “I did.”

Ant. I'll help thee—I have been a man Ventidius.

Vent. Yes, and a brave one; but——

Ant. I know thy meaning.

But I have lost my reason, have disgrac'd
The name of soldier with inglorious ease;
“In the full vintage of my flowing honours
“Sat still, and saw it prest by other hands;
“Fortune came smiling to my youth and woo'd it,
“And purple greatness met my ripen'd years.
“When first I came to empire I was borne
“On tides of people crowding to my triumphs,
“The wish of nations, and the willing world
“Receiv'd me as its pledge of future peace.
“I was so great, so happy, so belov'd,
“Fate could not ruin me, till I took pains,

" And work'd against my Fortune, chid her from me,
 " And turn'd her loose; yet still she came again.
 " My careless days and my luxurious nights
 " At length have weary'd her, and now she's gone,
 " Gone, gone, divorc'd for ever." Help me, soldier,
 To curse this madman, this industrious fool,
 Who labour'd to be wretched. Prithee curse me.

Vent. No.

Ant. Why?

Vent. You are too sensible already
 Of what you've done, too conscious of your failings,
 And like a scorpion whipt by others first
 To fury, sting yourself in mad revenge.
 I would bring balm, and pour it in your wounds,
 Cure your distemper'd mind, and heal your fortunes.

Ant. I know thou wouldst.

Vent. I will.

Ant. " Ha, ha, ha, ha !

Vent. " You laugh.

Ant. " I do, to see officious love
 " Give cordials to the dead.

Vent. " You would be lost then?

Ant. " I am.

Vent. " I say you are not. Try your fortune.

Ant. " I have to th' utmost. Dost thou think me des-
 " Without just cause? No, when I found all lost [perate
 " Beyond repair I hid me from the world,
 " And learn'd to scorn it here, which now I do
 " So heartily, I think it is not worth
 " The cost of keeping.

Vent. " Cæsar thinks not so;

" He'll thank you for the gift he could not take.
 " You would be kill'd like Tully, would you? Do
 " Hold out your throat to Cæsar and die tamely.

Ant. " No, I can kill myself, and so resolve.

Vent. " I can die with you too when time shall serve;
 " But Fortune calls upon us now to live,
 " To fight, to conquer."

Ant. Sure thou dreamst Ventidius.

Vent. No, 't is you dream; you sleep away your hours
 In desp'rate sloth, miscall'd philosophy.
 Up, up, for honour's sake! twelve legions wait you.

And long to call you chief: by painful journies
I led 'em, patient both of heat and hunger,
Down from the Parthian marches to the Nile:
'Twill do you good to see their sunburnt faces,
Their scarr'd cheeks, and chopt hands: there's virtue in
They'll sell those mangled limbs at dearer rates ['em:
Than yon' trim bands can buy.

Ant. Where left you them?

Vent. I said in Lower Syria.

Ant. Bring 'em hither;
There may be life in these.

Vent. They will not come.

Ant. Why didst thou mock my hopes with promis'd aids
To double my despair? they're mutinous.

Vent. Most firm and loyal.

Ant. " Yet they will not march
" To succour me. Oh trisler!

Vent. " They petition

" You would make haste to head 'em.

Ant. " I'm besieg'd.

Vent. " There's but one way shut up—How came I

Ant. I will not stir. [hither?

Vent. " They would perhaps desire

" A better reason.

Ant. " I have never us'd

" My soldiers to demand a reason of

" My actions." Why did they refuse to march?

Vent. They said they would not fight for Cleopatra.

Ant. What was't they said?

Vent. They said they would not fight for Cleopatra:
Why should they fight indeed to make her conquer,
And make you more a slave? to gain you kingdoms,
Which for a kiss at your next midnight feast
You'll sell to her?—" Then she new names her jewels,

" And calls this diamond such or such a tax;

" Each pendant in her ear shall be a province."

Ant. Ventidius, I allow your tongue free licence
On all my other faults, but on your life
No word of Cleopatra; she deserves
More worlds than I can lose.

Vent. Behold, you Pow'rs!
To whom you have intrusted humankind;

See Europe, Africk, Asia, put in balance,
 And all weigh'd down by one light worthless woman!
 "I think the gods are Antonies, and give,
 "Like prodigals, this nether world away
 "To none but wasteful hands."

Ant. You grow presumptuous.

Vent. I take the privilege of plain love to speak.

Ant. Plain love! plain arrogance, plain insolence!
 Thy men are cowards, thou an envious traitor,
 Who under seeming honesty hath vented
 The burden of thy rank o'erflowing gall.
 Oh that thou wert my equal, great in arms
 As the first Cæsar was, that I might kill thee
 Without stain to my honour!

Vent. You may kill me:

You have done more already, call'd me traitor.

Ant. Art thou not one?

Vent. For showing you yourself,
 Which none else durst have done? But had I been
 That name, which I disdain to speak again,
 I needed not have sought your abject fortunes,
 Come to partake your fate, to die with you.
 What hinder'd me t'ave led my conq'ring Eagles
 To fill Octavia's bands? I could have been
 A traitor then, a glorious happy traitor,
 And not have been so call'd.

Ant. Forgive me soldier;
 I've been too passionate.

Vent. You thought me false,
 Thought my old age betray'd you. Kill me Sir,
 Pray kill me: yet you need not; your unkindness
 Has left your sword no work.

Ant. I did not think so;
 I said it in my rage: prithee forgive me.
 Why didst thou tempt my anger by discov'ry
 Of what I would not hear?

Vent. No prince but you
 Could merit that sincerity I us'd,
 Nor durst another man have ventur'd it:
 "But you, ere love misled your wand'ring eyes,
 "Were sure the chief and best of human race,
 "Fram'd in the very pride and boast of nature;

“ So perfect, that the gods who form’d you wonder’d.
 “ At their own skill, and cry’d, A lucky hit
 “ Has mended our design. Their envy hinder’d
 “ Else you had been immortal, and a pattern
 “ When Heav’n would work for ostentation sake
 “ To copy out again.”

Ant. But Cleopatra——

Go on, for I can bear it now.

Vent. No more.

Ant. Thou dar’st not trust my passion, but thou may’st:
 Thou only lov’st, the rest have flatter’d me.

Vent. Heav’n’s blessing on your heart for that kind
 May I believe you love me? speak again. [word!]

Ant. Indeed I do. Speak this, and this, and this.

[Hugging him.]

Thy praises were unjust; but I’ll deserve ’em,
 And yet mend all. Do with me what thou wilt:
 Lead me to victory, thou know’st the way.

Vent. And will you leave this——

Ant. Prithee do not curse her

And I will leave her, tho’ Heav’n knows I love
 Beyond life, conquest, empire, all but honour:
 But I will leave her.

Vent. That’s my royal master.

And shall we fight?

Ant. I warrant thee old soldier;

Thou shalt behold me once again in iron,
 And at the head of our old troops that beat
 The Parthians cry aloud, Come, follow me.

Vent. Oh, now I hear my Emperour! In that word
 Octavius fell. Gods! let me see that day,
 And if I have ten years behind take all;
 I’ll thank you for th’ exchange.

Ant. “ Oh Cleopatra!

Vent. “ Again!

Ant. “ I’ve done; in that last sigh she went.

“ Cæsar shall know what ’tis to force a lover

“ From all he holds most dear.

Vent. “ Methinks you breathe

“ Another soul; your looks are more divine;

“ You speak a hero and you move a god.”

Ant. Oh, thou hast fir’d me! my soul’s up in arms,

And manns each part about me. Once again
That noble eagerness of fight has seiz'd me,
That eagerness with which I darted upward
To Cassius' camp: in vain the steepy hill
Oppos'd my way, in vain a war of spears
Sung round my head, and planted all my shield;
I won the trenches while my foremost men
Lagg'd on the plain below.

Vent. Ye gods, ye gods,
For such another honour!

Ant. Come on my soldier;
Our hearts and arms are still the same: I long
Once more to meet our foes, that thou and I,
Like Time and Death, marching before our troops
May taste fate to 'em, mow 'em out a passage,
And ent'ring where the foremost squadrons yield
Begin the noble harvest of the field. [*Exeunt.*]

ACT II.

SCENE, a grand saloon.

Enter CLEOPATRA, IRAS, and ALEXAS.

CLEOPATRA.

WHAT shall I do, or whither shall I turn!
Ventidius has o'ercome, and he will go.

Alex. He goes to fight for you.

Cleo. Then he would see me ere he went to fight.
Flatter me not; if once he goes he's lost,
And all my hopes destroy'd.

Alex. Does this weak passion
Become a mighty queen?

Cleo. I am no queen:
Is this to be a queen to be besieg'd
By yon' insulting Roman, and to wait
Each hour the victor's chain? These ills are small,
For Antony is lost, and I can mourn
For nothing else but him. Now come Octavius;
I have no more to lose; prepare thy bands;

I'm fit to be a captive: Antony
Has taught my mind the fortune of a slave.

Iras. Call reason to assist you.

Cleo. I have none,
And none would have: my love's a noble madness,
Which shows the cause deserv'd it. Moderate sorrow
Fits vulgar love, and for a vulgar man;
But I have lov'd with such transcendent passion,
I soar'd at first quite out of reason's view,
And now am lost above it—"No, I'm proud
" 'Tis thus: would Antony could see me now:
" Think you he would not sigh? tho' he must leave me.
" Sure he would sigh, for he is noble-natur'd,
" And bears a tender heart: I know him well:
" Ah no! I know him not: I knew him once,
" But now 'tis past.

Iras. "Let it be past with you:

"Forget him Madam.

Cleo. "Never, never, *Iras*:

"He once was mine, and once, tho' now 'tis gone,
"Leaves a faint image of possession still.

Alex. "Think him unconstant, cruel, and ungrateful.

Cleo. "I cannot; if I could those thoughts were vain:
"Faithless, ungrateful, cruel, tho' he be,
"I still must love him."

Enter CHARMION.

Now, what news my Charmion?
Will he be kind? and will he not forsake me?
Am I to live or die? "Nay, do I live,
"Or am I dead? for when he gave his answer
"Fate took the word, and then I liv'd or dy'd."

Char. I found him Madam——

Cleo. A long speech preparing!
If thou bringst comfort haste and give it me,
For never was more need.

Iras. I know he loves you.

Cleo. Had he been kind her eyes had told me so
Before her tongue could speak it: now she studies
To soften what he said: but give me death
Just as he sent it Charmion, undisguis'd,
And in the words he spoke.

Char. I found him then:

Encompass'd round I think with iron statues,
 So mute, so motionless, his soldiers stood,
 While awfully he cast his eyes about,
 And ev'ry leader's hopes and fears survey'd;
 Methought he look'd resolv'd, and yet not pleas'd:
 When he beheld me struggling in the crowd
 He blush'd, and bad make way.

Alex. There's comfort yet.

Char. Ventidius fix'd his eyes upon my passage
 Severely, as he meant to frown me back,
 And sullenly gave place. I told my message
 Just as you gave it, broken and disorder'd;
 I number'd in it all your sighs and tears,
 And while I mov'd your pitiful request,
 That you but only begg'd a last farewell,
 He fetch'd an inward groan, and ev'ry time
 I nam'd you sigh'd as if his heart were breaking,
 But shunn'd my eyes, and guiltily look'd down.
 He seem'd not now that awful Antony
 Who shook an arm'd assembly with his nod,
 But making show as he would rub his eyes
 Disguis'd and blotted out a falling tear.

Cleo. Did he then weep? and was I worth a tear?
 If what thou hast to say be not as pleasing
 Tell me no more, but let me die contented.

Char. He bid me say He knew himself so well
 He could deny you nothing if he saw you,
 And therefore——

Cleo. Thou wouldst say he would not see me.

Char. And therefore begg'd you not to use a pow'r
 Which he could ill resist; yet he should ever
 Respect you as he ought.

Cleo. Is that a word

For Antony to use to Cleopatra?

Oh, that faint word Respect! how I disdain it!
 Disdain myself for loving after it!

“He should have kept that word for cold Octavia;
 “Respect is for a wife. Am I that thing,
 “That dull insipid lump, without desires,
 “And without pow'r to give 'em?”

Alex. You misjudge;

You see thro' love, and that deludes your sight,

“As what is straight seems crooked thro’ the water;”
 But I who bear my reason undisturb’d
 Can see this Antony, this dreaded man,
 A fearful slave, who fain would run away,
 And shuns his master’s eyes; if you pursue him
 My life on’t he still drags a chain along
 That needs must clog his flight.

Cleo. Could I believe thee——

Alex. By ev’ry circumstance I know he loves.
 True, he’s hard prest by int’rest and by honour;
 Yet he but doubts and parlies, and casts out
 Many a long look for succour.

Cleo. He sends word
 He fears to see my face.

Alex. And would you move?
 He shows his weakness who declines the combat;
 And you must urge your fortune. Could he speak
 More plainly? to my ears the message sounds,
 Come to my rescue Cleopatra, come;
 Come free me from Ventidius, from my tyrant;
 See me, and give me a pretence to leave him. [*A march.*]
 I hear his trumpets. This way he must pass.
 Please you retire a while; I’ll work him first,
 That he may bend more easy.

Cleo. You shall rule me,
 But all I fear in vain. [*Exit with Char. and Iras.*]

Alex. I fear so too,
 Tho’ I conceal’d my thoughts to make her bold;
 But ’tis our utmost means, and Fate befriend it.
 [*Withdraws. A march till all are on.*]

Enter Liſſors with ſaſſes, one bearing the Eagle; then enter

ANTONY and VENTIDIUS, followed by other commanders.

Ant. Octavius is the minion of blind Chance,
 But holds from Virtue nothing.

Vent. Has he courage?

Ant. But just enough to season him from coward.
 Oh! ’tis the coldest youth upon a charge,
 The most deliberate fighter! if he ventures
 (As in Ilyria once they say he did)
 To storm a town ’tis when he cannot chuse,
 When all the world have fixt their eyes upon him;

And then he lives on that for sev'n years after:
But at a close revenge he never fails.

Vent. I heard you challeng'd him.

Ant. I did Ventidius:

What think'st thou was his answer? 't was so tame—
He said he had more ways than one to die,
I had not.

Vent. Poor!

Ant. He has more ways than one,
But he would chuse 'em all before that one.

Vent. He first would chuse an ague or a fever.

Ant. No, it must be an ague, not a fever;
He has not warmth enough to die by that.

Vent. Or old age and a bed.

Ant. Ay, there's his choice;

He would live like a lamp to the last wink,
And crawl upon the utmost verge of life.
Oh Hercules! why should a man like this,
Who dares not trust his fate for one great action,
Be all the care of Heav'n? why should he lord it
O'er fourscore thousand men of whom each one
Is braver than himself?

Vent. "You conquer'd for him;

"Philippi knows it: there you shar'd with him

"That empire which your sword made all your own.

Ant. "Fool that I was! upon my Eagle's wings

"I bore this wren till I was tir'd with soaring,

"And now he mounts above me.

"Good Heav'ns! is this, is this the man who braves me,

"Who bids my age make way, drives me before him

"To the world's ridge, and sweeps me off like rubbish?"

Vent. Sir, we lose time; the troops are mounted all.

Ant. Then give the word to march:

I long to leave this prison of a town

To join thy legions, and in open field

Once more to show my face. Lead, my deliverer.

Enter ALEXAS.

Alex. Great Emperour,

In mighty arms renown'd above mankind,

But in soft pity to th' oppress'd a god,

This message sends the mournful Cleopatra

To her departing lord.

Vent. Smooth sycophant!

Alex. A thousand wishes and ten thousand pray'rs,
Millions of blessings, wait you to the wars;
Millions of sighs and tears she sends you too,
And would have sent

“As many dear embraces to your arms,”
As many parting kisses to your lips,
But those she fears have weary'd you already.

Vent. aside.] False crocodile!

Alex. And yet she begs not now you would not leave her;
That were a wish too mighty for her hopes,
And too presuming, (for her low fortune and your ebbing
That were a wish for her most prosp'rous days, [love]
Her blooming beauty and your growing kindness.

Ant. aside.] Well, I must man it out—What would the Queen?

Alex. First to these noble warriors who attend
Your daring courage in the chase of fame
(Too daring and too dang'rous for her quiet)
She humbly recommends all she holds dear,
All her own cares and fears, the care of you.

Vent. Yes, witness Actium.

Ant. Let him speak Ventidius.

Alex. You, when his matchless valour bears him forward
With ardour too heroick on his foes,
Fall down as she would do before his feet,
Lie in his way, and stop the paths of Death;
Tell him this god is not invulnerable,
That absent Cleopatra bleeds in him;
And that you may remember her petition
She begs you wear these trifles as a pawn,
Which at your wish'd return she will redeem

[Gives jewels to the commanders.]

With all the wealth of Egypt.
This to the great Ventidius she presents,
Whom she can never count her enemy,
Because he loves her lord.

Vent. Tell her I'll none on't;
I'm not ashamed of honest poverty:
Not all the diamonds of the East can bribe
Ventidius from his faith. I hope to see

These and the rest of all her sparkling store
Where they shall more deservingly be plac'd.

Ant. And who must wear 'em then?

Vent. The wrong'd Octavia.

Ant. You might have spar'd that word.

Vent. And she that bribe.

Ant. But have I no remembrance!

Alex. Yes, a dear one;

Your slave, the Queen——

Ant. My mistress.

Alex. Then your mistress.

Your mistress would, she says, have sent her soul,
But that you had long since; she humbly begs
This ruby bracelet, set with bleeding hearts,
(The emblems of her own) may bind your arm.

[*Presenting a bracelet.*]

Vent. Now my best Lord, in Honour's name I ask you,
For manhood's sake, and for your own dear safety,
Touch not these poison'd gifts,
Infected by the sender; touch 'em not;
Myriads of bluest plagues lie underneath 'em,
And more than aconite has dipt the silk.

Ant. Nay, now you grow too cynical Ventidius;
A lady's favours may be worn with honour.

What, to refuse her bracelet! on my soul
When I lie pensive in my tent alone
'Twill pass the wakeful hours of winter nights
To tell these pretty beads upon my arm,
To count for ev'ry one a soft embrace,
A melting kiss at such and such a time,
And now and then the fury of her love,
When—And what harm's in this?

Alex. None, none, my Lord,
But what's to her, that now 'tis past for ever.

Ant. going to tie it.] We soldiers are so awkward—help
me tie it.

Alex. In faith my Lord we courtiers too are awkward
In these affairs; so are all men indeed;

"Ev'n I who am not one." But shall I speak?

Ant. Yes, freely.

Alex. Then, my Lord, fair hands alone
Are fit to tie it; she who sent it can.

Vent. Hell! death! this eunuch pander ruins you.
You will not see her?

[*Alexas whispers an Attendant, who goes out.*]

Ant. But to take my leave.

Vent. Then I have wash'd an Ethiop. Y'are undone!
Y'are in the toils! y'are taken! y'are destroy'd!
Her eyes do Cæsar's work.

Ant. You fear too soon:

I'm constant to myself: I know my strength;
And yet she shall not think me barb'rous neither,
Born in the deeps of Africk: I'm a Roman,
Bred to the rules of soft humanity.
A guest, and kindly us'd, should bid farewell.

Vent. You do not know

How weak you are to her, how much an infant;
You are not proof against a smile or glance;
A sigh will quite disarm you.

Ant. See, she comes!

Now you shall find your error. Gods! I thank you;
I form'd the danger greater than it was,
And now 'tis near 'tis lessen'd.

Vent. Mark the end yet.

Enter CLEOPATRA, CHARMION, and IRAS.

Ant. Well, Madam, we are met.

Cleo. Is this a meeting!

Then we must part!

Ant. We must.

Cleo. Who says we must?

Ant. Our own hard fates.

Cleo. We make those fates ourselves.

Ant. Yes, we have made 'em; we have lov'd each other
Into our mutual ruin.

Cleo. The gods have seen my joys with envious eyes;
"I have no friends in heav'n;" and all the world
(As 'twere the bus'ness of mankind to part us)
Is arm'd against my love; ev'n you yourself
Join with the rest: you, you are arm'd against me.

Ant. I will be justify'd in all I do
To late posterity, and therefore hear me.
If I mix a lie
With any truth reproach me freely with it,
Else favour me with silence.

Cleo. You command me,
And I am dumb.

Vent. I like this well: he shows authority.

Ant. That I derive my ruin
From you alone——

Cleo. Oh Heav'ns! I ruin you!

Ant. You promis'd me your silence, and you break it
Ere I have scarce begun.

Cleo. Well, I obey you.

Ant. When I beheld you first it was in Egypt,
Ere Cæsar saw your eyes: you gave me love,
And were too young to know it. That I settled
Your father in his throne was for your sake;
I left th' acknowledgment for time to ripen.
Cæsar stepp'd in, and with a greedy hand
Pluck'd the green fruit ere the first blush of red
Yet cleaving to the bough. He was my lord,
And was beside too great for me to rival:
But I deserv'd you first tho' he enjoy'd you.
When after I beheld you in Cilicia
An enemy to Rome I pardon'd you.

Cleo. I clear'd myself——

Ant. Again you break your promise.
I lov'd you still, and took your weak excuses,
Took you into my bosom stain'd by Cæsar,
And not half mine: I went to Egypt with you,
And hid me from the bus'ness of the world,
Shut out inquiring nations from my sight
To give whole years to you.

Vent. Yes, to your shame be't spoken.

[*Aside.*

Ant. How I lov'd

Witness ye days and nights, and all ye hours,
That danc'd away with down upon your feet,
As all your bus'ness were to count my passion.
One day past by and nothing saw but love;
Another came and still 't was only love:
The suns were weary'd out with looking on
And I untir'd with loving.

I saw you ev'ry day, and all the day,
And ev'ry day was still but as the first,
So eager was I still to see you more.

Vent. 'Tis all too true.

Ant. Fulvia my wife grew jealous,
As she indeed had reason, rais'd a war
In Italy to call me back.

Vent. But yet
You went not.

Ant. While within your arms I lay
The world fell mould'ring from my hands each hour,
And left me scarce a grasp; I thank your love for't.

Vent. Well push'd: that last was home.

Cleo. Yet may I speak?

Ant. If I have urg'd a falsehood yes; else not.
Your silence says I have not. Fulvia dy'd:
(Pardon, you gods! with my unkindness dy'd.)
To set the world at peace I took Octavia,
This Cæsar's sister. In her pride of youth
And flow'r of beauty did I wed that lady,
Whom blushing I must praise, altho' I left her.
You call'd; my love obey'd the fatal summons:
This rais'd the Roman arms; the cause was your's.
I would have fought by land, where I was stronger;
You hinder'd it; yet when I fought at sea
Forsook me fighting; and oh, stain to honour!
Oh lasting shame! I knew not that I fled,
But fled to follow you.

Vent. What haste she made to hoist her purple sails!
And to appear magnificent in flight
Drew half our strength away.

Ant. All this you caus'd:
And would you multiply more ruins on me?
This honest man, my best, my only friend,
Has gather'd up the shipwreck of my fortunes:
Twelve legions I have left, my last recruits,
And you have watch'd the news, and bring your eyes
To seize them too. If you have ought to answer
Now speak, you have free leave.

Alex. She stands confounded:
Despair is in her eyes.

[*Aside.*

Vent. Now lay a sigh i' th' way to stop his passage;
Prepare a tear, and bid it for his legions:
'Tis like they shall be sold.

Cleo. How shall I plead my cause when you my judge
Already have condemn'd me? Shall I bring

The love you bore me for my advocate?
 That now is turn'd against me, that destroys me;
 For love once past is at the best forgotten,
 But oftner sours to hate. It will please my Lord
 To ruin me, and therefore I'll be guilty;
 But could I once have thought it would have pleas'd you,
 That you would pry with narrow searching eyes
 Into my faults, severe to my destruction,
 And watching all advantages with care
 That serve to make me wretched! Speak my Lord,
 For I end here. Tho' I deserve this usage,
 Was it like you to give it?

Ant. Oh, you wrong me
 To think I sought this parting, or desir'd
 T' accuse you more than what will clear myself,
 And justify this breach.

Cleo. Thus low I thank you,
 And since my innocence will not offend
 I shall not blush to own it.

Vent. After this
 I think she'll blush at nothing.

Cleo. You seem griev'd
 (And therein you are kind) that Cæsar first
 Enjoy'd my love, tho' you deserv'd it better;
 For had I first been your's it would have sav'd
 My second choice; I never had been his,
 And ne'er had been but your's. But Cæsar first,
 You say, possess'd my love. Not so my Lord:
 He first possess'd my person, you my love:
 Cæsar lov'd me, but I lov'd Antony:
 "If I endur'd him after 't was because
 "I judg'd it due to the first name of men;
 "And half constrain'd I gave, as to a tyrant,
 "What he would take by force."

Vent. Oh Siren! Siren!
 Yet grant that all the love she boasts were true,
 Has she not ruin'd you? I still urge that,
 The fatal consequence.

Cleo. The consequence indeed,
 For I dare challenge him, my greatest foe,
 To say it was design'd. It is true I lov'd you,
 And kept you far from an uneasy wife,

Such Fulvia was.

Yes; but he'll say you left Octavia for me:
And can you blame me to receive that love
Which quitted such desert for worthless me?
How often have I wish'd some other Cæsar,
Great as the first, and as the second young,
Would court my love to be refus'd for you! [tium!

Vent. Words, words! but Actium Sir, remember Ac-

Cleo. Ev'n there I dare his malice. True; I counsell'd
To fight at sea; but I betray'd you not:
I fled, but not to the enemy. 'Twas fear:
Would I had been a man not to have fear'd,
For none would then have envy'd me your friendship
Who envy me your love.

Ant. We're both unhappy:
If nothing else yet our ill fortune parts us.
Speak! would you have me perish by my stay?

Cleo. If as a friend you ask my judgment go;
If as a lover stay. If you must perish—
'Tis a hard word: but stay.

Vent. See now th' effects of her so boasted love!
She strives to drag you down to ruin with her;
But could she 'scape without you, oh how soon.
Would she let go her hold, and haste to shore.
And never look behind!

Cleo. Then judge my love by this.

[Giving Antony a writing.

Could I have borne
A life or death, a happiness or wo,
From your's divided, this had giv'n me means.

Ant. By Hercules the writing of Octavius!
"I know it well: 't is that proscribing hand,
"Young as it was, that led the way to mine,
"And left me but the second place in murder"—
See, see, Ventidius! here he offers Egypt,
And joins all Syria to it as a present,
So in requital she forsakes my fortunes
And joins her arms with his.

Cleo. And yet you leave me!
You leave me Antony; and yet I love you!
Indeed I do! I have refus'd a kingdom,

Dij

That 's a trifle ;
 For I could part with life, with any thing,
 But only you. Oh let me die but with you!
 Is that a hard request?

Ant. Next living with you
 'Tis all that Heav'n can give.

Alex. "He melts; we conquer."

[*Aside.*

Cleo. No, you shall go; your int'rest calls you hence:
 Yes, your dear int'rest pulls too strong for these
 Weak arms to hold you here—— [Takes his hand.
 Go, leave me Soldier,
 (For you're no more a lover) leave me dying;
 Push me all pale and panting from your bosom,
 And when your march begins let one run after,
 Breathless almost for joy, and cry She's dead!
 The soldiers shout. You then perhaps may sigh,
 And muster all your Roman gravity;
 Ventidius chides, and straight your brow clears up
 As I had never been.

Ant. Gods! 'tis too much! too much for man to bear!

Cleo. What is't for me then,
 A weak forsaken woman and a lover?
 Here let me breathe my last; envy me not
 This minute in your arms! I'll die "apace,
 "As fast as ere I can," and end your trouble.

Ant. Die!—rather let me perish, loosen'd nature
 Leap from its hinges, sink the props of heav'n,
 And fall the skies to crush the nether world!
 My eyes! my soul! my all!—— [Embraces her.

Vent. "And what's this toy
 "In balance with your fortune, honour, fame?

Ant. "What is't Ventidius? it outweighs them all.
 "Why, we have more than conquer'd Cæsar now;
 "My Queen's not only innocent but loves me.
 "This, this is she who drags me down to ruin!"
 But could she 'scape without me, with what haste
 Would she let slip her hold, and make to shore
 And never look behind!
 Down on thy knees, blasphemer as thou art,
 And ask forgiveness of wrong'd innocence.

Vent. I'll rather die than take it. Will you go?

Ant. Go! whither? go from all that's excellent!

"Faith, honour, virtue, all good things, forbid
 "That I should go from her who sets my love
 "Above the price of kingdoms." Give, you gods!

Give to your boy, your Cæsar,
 This rattle of a globe to play withal,
 This gewgaw world, and put him cheaply off;
 I'll not be pleas'd with less than Cleopatra.

Cleo. She's wholly your's. My heart's so full of joy
 That I shall do some wild extravagance
 Of love in publick, and the foolish world,
 Which knows not tenderness, will think me mad.

Vent. Oh women! women! women! all the gods
 Have not such pow'r of doing good to man
 As you of doing harm.

[Exit.

Ant. Our men are arm'd;
 Unbar the gate that looks to Cæsar's camp;
 I would revenge the treachery he meant me,
 And long security makes conquest easy.
 I'm eager to return before I go,
 For all the pleasures I have known beat thick
 On my remembrance. How I long for night!
 That both the sweets of mutual love may try,
 And triumph once o'er Cæsar ere we die.

[Exeunt.

ACT III.

*Enter CLEOPATRA, CHARMION, IRAS, ALEXAS, and a
 train of Egyptians, ANTONY and Romans; Cleopatra
 crowns Antony.*

ANTONY.

"I Thought how those white arms would fold me in,
 "And strain me close and melt me into love:
 "So pleas'd with that sweet image I sprung forwards,
 "And added all my strength to ev'ry blow.

Cleo. "Come to me, come, my soldier, to my arms,
 "You've been too long away from my embraces;
 "But when I have you fast, and all my own,
 "With broken murmurs and with am'rous sighs
 "I'll say you are unkind, and punish you,
 "And mark you red with many an eager kiss."

Ant. My brighter Venus!

Cleo. Oh, my greater Mars!

Ant. Thou join'st us well my love.

" Suppose me come from the Phlegrean plains,
 " Where gasping giants lay cleft by my sword,
 " And mountain-tops pair'd off each other blow
 " To bury those I slew; receive me goddess!
 " Let Cæsar spread his subtle nets like Vulcan,
 " In thy embraces I would be beheld
 " By heav'n and earth at once,
 " And make their envy what they meant their sport.
 " Let those who took us blush; I would love on
 " With awful state, regardless of their frowns,
 " As their superiour god."

There's no satiety of love in thee;
 Enjoy'd thou still art new; perpetual spring
 Is in thy arms; the ripen'd fruit but falls
 And blossoms rise to fill its empty place,
 And I grow rich by giving.

Enter VENTIDIUS, and stands apart.

Alex. Oh, now the danger's past your general comes;
 He joins not in your joys, nor minds your triumphs,
 But with contracted brows looks frowning on,
 As envying your success.

Ant. Now on my soul he loves me, truly loves me;
 He never flatter'd me in any vice,
 But awes me with his virtue: ev'n this minute
 Methinks he has a right of chiding me.
 Lead to the temple; I'll avoid his presence;
 It checks too strong upon me.

[Exeunt the rest.]

[As Antony is going Ventidius pulls him by the robe.]

Vent. Emperour!

Ant. 'Tis the old argument; I prithee spare me.

[Looking back.]

Vent. But this one hearing Emperour.

Ant. Let go

My robe, or by my father Hercules——

Vent. By Hercules' father—that's yet greater,
 I bring you somewhat you would wish to know.

Ant. Thou see'st we are observ'd; attend me here
 And I'll return.

[Exit.]

Vent. I'm waning in his favour, yet I love him;

I love this man who runs to meet his ruin!
 And sure the gods like me are fond of him:
 His virtues lie so mingled with his crimes
 As would confound their choice to punish one
 And not reward the other.

Enter ANTONY.

Ant. We can conquer
 You see without your aid:
 We have dislodg'd their troops,
 "They look on us at distance, and like curs
 "'Scap'd from the lion's paws they bay far off,
 "And lick their wounds, and faintly threaten war."
 Five thousand Romans, with their faces upward,
 Lie breathless on the plain.

Vent. 'Tis well; and he
 Who lost 'em could have spar'd ten thousand more:
 Yet if by this advantage you could gain
 An easier peace, while Cæsar doubts the chance
 Of arms——

Ant. Oh, think not on't Ventidius!
 The boy pursues my ruin; he'll no peace!
 "His malice is consid'rate in advantage:
 "Oh, he's the coolest murderer! so stanch,
 "He kills and keeps his temper."

Vent. Have you no friend
 In all his army who has pow'r to move him?
 Mecænas or Agrippa might do much.

Ant. "They're both too deep in Cæsar's interests.
 "We'll work it out by dint of sword or perish.

Vent. "Fain I would find some other.

Ant. "Thank thy love.
 "Some four or five such victories as this
 "Will save thy farther pains.

Vent. "Expect no more; Cæsar is on his guard.
 "I know, Sir, you have conquer'd against odds;
 "But still you draw supplies from one poor town,
 "And of Egyptians; he has all the world,
 "And at his beck nations come pouring in
 "To fill the gaps you make." Pray think again.

Ant. Why dost thou drive me from myself to search
 For foreign aids, to hunt my memory,
 And range all o'er a wide and barren place

To find a friend? The wretched have no friends——
 Yet I have one, the bravest youth of Rome,
 Whom Cæsar loves beyond the love of women;
 "He could resolve his mind as fire does wax,
 "From that hard rugged image melt him down,
 "And mould him in what softer form he pleas'd."

Vent. Him would I see, that man of all the world!
 Just such a one we want.

Ant. He lov'd me too;
 I was his soul; he liv'd not but in me:
 We were so clos'd within each other's breasts
 The rivets were not found that join'd us first
 "That does not reach us yet: we were so mixt
 "As meeting streams, both to ourselves were lost:
 "We were one mass: we could not give or take
 "But from the same; for he was I, I he.

Vent. "He moves as I would wish him.

[*Aside.*

"Ant." After this

I need not tell his name: 't was Dolabella.

Vent. He's now in Cæsar's camp.

Ant. No matter where,
 Since he's no longer mine. He took unkindly
 That I forbade him Cleopatra's fight,
 Because I fear'd he lov'd her. "He confess
 "He had a warmth which for my sake he stifled;
 "For 't were impossible that two so one
 "Should not have lov'd the same. When he departed
 "He took no leave, and that confirm'd my thoughts.

Vent. "It argues that he lov'd you more than her,
 "Else he had staid; but he perceiv'd you jealous,
 "And would not grieve his friend. I know he loves you.

Ant. "I should have seen him then ere now.

Vent. "Perhaps

"He has thus long been lab'ring for your peace.

"Ant." Would he were here!

Vent. Would you believe he lov'd you?
 I read your answer in your eyes you would.
 Not to conceal it longer, he has sent
 A messenger from Cæsar's camp with letters.

Ant. Let him appear.

Vent. I'll bring him instantly.

[*Exit Ventidius, and reenters immediately with Dolabella.*

Ant. 'Tis he himself, himself! by holy friendship!

[Runs to embrace him,

Art thou return'd at last, my better half!

Come, give me all myself!

"Let me not live

"If the young bridegroom longing for his night

"Was ever half so fond."

Dol. I must be silent, for my soul is busy
About a nobler work. She's new come home,
Like a long absent man, and wanders o'er
Each room, a stranger to her own, to look
If all be safe.

Ant. Thou hast what's left of me,

"For I am now so sunk from what I was

"Thou find'st me at my lowest watermark:

"The rivers that ran in and rais'd my fortunes

"Are all dry'd up, or take another course:

"What I have left is from my native spring;

"I've still a heart that swells in scorn of Fate,

"And lifts me to my banks.

Dol. "Still you are lord of all the world to me.

Ant. "Why, then I yet am so, for thou art all!

"If I had any joy when thou wert absent

"I grudg'd it to myself; methought I robb'd

"Thee of thy part." But oh, my Dolabella!

Thou hast beheld me other than I am——

Hast thou not seen my morning chambers fill'd

With sceptr'd slaves who waited to salute me?

With eastern monarchs, who forgot the sun

To worship my uprising? Menial kings—

"Ran coursing up and down my palace-yard,"

Stood silenc'd in my presence, watch'd my eyes,

And at my least command all started out

Like racers to the goal.

Dol. Slaves to your fortune.

Ant. Fortune is Cæsar's now; and what am I?

Vent. What you have made yourself: I will not flatter.

Ant. Is this friendly done?

Dol. Yes, when his end is so: I must join with him;
Indeed I must, and yet you must not chide:

Why am I else your friend?

Ant. Take heed, young man,

How thou upbraid'st my love! the Queen has eyes,
And thou too hast a soul! Canst thou remember
When, swell'd with hatred, thou beheld'st her first
As accessory to thy brother's death?

Dol. Spare my remembrance! 't was a guilty day,
And still the blush hangs here.

Ant. To clear herself

For sending him no aid she came from Egypt,
Her galley down the silver Sydnos row'd,
The tackling silk, the streamers wav'd with gold,
The gentle winds were lodg'd in purple sails,
Her nymphs like Nereids round her couch were plac'd,
Where she another seaborn Venus lay.

Dol. No more! I would not hear it!

Ant. Oh, you must!

She lay, and leant her cheek upon her hand,
And cast a look so languishingly sweet,
As if secure of all beholders' hearts
Neglecting she could take 'em. Boys, like Cupids,
Stood fanning with their painted wings the winds
That play'd about her face; but if she smil'd,
A darting glory seem'd to blaze abroad,
That mens' desiring eyes were never weary'd,
But hung upon the object! To soft flutes
The silver oars kept time, and while they play'd,
The hearing gave new pleasure to the sight,
And both to thought. 'T was heav'n, or somewhat more!
For she so charm'd all hearts, that gazing crowds
Stood panting on the shore, and wanted breath
To give their welcome voice.

Then Dolabella, where was then thy soul?
Was not thy fury quite disarm'd with wonder?
Didst thou not shrink behind me from those eyes,
And whisper in my ear, Oh, tell her not
That I accus'd her of my brother's death!

Dol. And should my weakness be a plea for your's?
Mine was an age when love might be excus'd,
"When kindly warmth and when my springing youth
"Made it a debt to nature:" your's——

Vent. Speak boldly:

Your's, he would say, in your declining age,
"When no more heat was left but what you forc'd,

"When all the sap was needful for the trunk,
 "When it went down then they constrain'd the course,
 "And robb'd from Nature to supply desire."
 In you (I would not use so harsh a word)
 'Tis but plain dotage.

Ant. Ha!

Dol. 'Twas urg'd too home.
 But yet the loss was private that I made;
 'Twas but myself I lost: I lost no legions;
 I had no world to lose, no peoples' love.

Ant. This from a friend?

Dol. Yes, Antony, a true one;
 A friend so tender, that each word I speak
 Stabs my own heart before it reach your ear.
 Oh! judge me not less kind because I chide.
 To Cæsar I excuse you.

Ant. Oh ye Gods!

Have I then liv'd to be excus'd to Cæsar!

Dol. As to your equal.

Ant. Well, he's but my equal:
 While I wear this he never shall be more.

Dol. I bring conditions from him.

Ant. Are they noble?

Methinks thou shouldst not bring 'm else; yet he
 Is full of deep dissembling, knows no honour
 Divided from his int'rest. "Fate mistook him,
 "For Nature meant him for an usurer:"
 He's fit indeed to buy, not conquer kingdoms.

Vent. Then granting this,

What pow'r was theirs who wrought so hard a temper
 To honourable terms?

Ant. It was my Dolabella or some god.

Dol. Not I, nor yet Mecænas nor Agrippa;
 They were your enemies, and I a friend
 Too weak alone; yet 'twas a Roman deed.

Ant. 'Twas like a Roman done. Show me that man
 Who has preserv'd my life, my love, my honour;
 Let me but see his face.

Vent. That task is mine,

And, Heav'n! thou know'st how pleasing. [*Exit Vent.*]

Dol. You'll remember
 To whom you stand oblig'd?

Ant. When I forget it
Be thou unkind, and that's my greatest curse.
My Queen shall thank him too.

Dol. I fear she will not.

Ant. But she shall do't. The Queen, my Dolabella!
Hast thou not still some grudgings of thy fever?

Dol. I would not see her lost.

Ant. When I forsake her
Leave me my better stars, for she has truth
Beyond her beauty. Cæsar tempted her
At no less price than kingdoms to betray me;
But she resisted all: and yet thou chid'st me
For loving her too well. Could I do so?

Dol. Yes; there's my reason.

*Reenter VENTIDIUS with OCTAVIA, leading Antony's two
little daughters.*

Ant. Where—Octavia there! [*Starting back.*

Vent. What! is she poison to you? a disease?
Look on her, view her well, and those she brings:
Are they all strangers to your eyes? has Nature
No secret call, no whisper, they are your's?

Dol. For shame my Lord! if not for love, receive 'em
With kinder eyes. If you confess a man
Meet 'em, embrace 'em, bid 'em welcome to you.
"Your arms should open, ev'n without your knowledge,
"To clasp 'em in; your feet should turn to wings
"To bear you to 'em; and your eyes dart out
"And aim a kiss ere you could reach their lips."

Ant. I stood amaz'd to think how they came hither.

Vent. I sent for 'em; I brought them in unknown
To Cleopatra's guards.

Dol. Yet are you cold?

Os. Thus long I have attended for my welcome,
Which as a stranger sure I might expect.
Who am I?

Ant. Cæsar's sister.

Os. That's unkind!
Had I been nothing more than Cæsar's sister
Know I had still remain'd in Cæsar's camp;
But your Octavia, your much injur'd wife,
Tho' banish'd from your bed, driv'n from your house,
In spite of Cæsar's sister still is your's.

'Tis true I have a heart disdains your coldness,
And prompts me not to seek what you should offer;
But a wife's virtue still surmounts that pride:
I come to claim you as my own, to show
My duty first, to ask, nay beg, your kindness.
Your hand my Lord; 't is mine, and I will have it.

[Taking his hand.

Vent. Do, take it, thou deserv'st it.

Dol. On my soul

And so she does. "She's neither too submissive

"Nor yet too haughty; but so just a mean

"Shows, as it ought, a wife and Roman too."

Ant. I fear, Octavia, you have begg'd my life.

Oct. Begg'd it my Lord?

Ant. Yes, begg'd it, my ambassadress;

Poorly and basely begg'd it, of your brother.

Oct. Poorly and basely I could never beg,

Nor could my brother grant.

Ant. Shall I, who to my kneeling slave could say

Rise up and be a king, shall I fall down

And cry Forgive me Cæsar? "Shall I set

"A man my equal in the place of Jove,

"As he could give me being?" No; that word

Forgive would choke me up,

And die upon my tongue.

Dol. You shall not need it.

Ant. I will not need it. Come, you've all betray'd me—

"My friend too! to receive some vile conditions."

My wife has bought me with her pray'rs and tears,

And now I must become her-branded slave:

In ev'ry peevish mood she will upbraid

The life she gave: if I but look awry

She cries I'll tell my brother.

Oct. My hard fortune

Subjects me still to your unkind mistakes:

But the conditions I have brought are such

You need not blush to take. I love your honour,

Because 't is mine. It never shall be said

Octavia's husband was her brother's slave.

Sir, you are free, free ev'n from her you loathe;

For tho' my brother bargains for your love,

E

Makes me the price and cement of your peace,
 I have a soul like your's; I cannot take
 Your love as alms, nor beg what I deserve.
 I'll tell my brother we are reconcil'd;
 He shall draw back his troops, and you shall march
 To rule the East. I may be dropt at Athens;
 No matter where; I never will complain,
 But only keep the barren name of wife,
 And rid you of the trouble.

Vent. Was ever such a strife of sullen honour!
 Both scorn to be oblig'd.

Dol. Oh she has touch'd him in the tend'rest part:
 See how he reddens with despight and shame
 To be outdone in generosity!

Vent. "See how he winks! how he dries up a tear
 "That fain would fall!"

Ant. Octavia, I have heard you, and must praise
 The greatness of your soul,
 But cannot yield to what you have propos'd;
 For I can ne'er be conquer'd but by love,
 And you do all for duty. You would free me,
 And would be dropt at Athens; was't not so?

Os. It was my Lord.

Ant. Then I must be oblig'd
 To one who loves me not, who to herself
 May call me thankless and ungrateful man.
 I'll not endure it; no.

Vent. I'm glad it pinches there.

Os. Would you triumph o'er poor Octavia's virtue?
 That pride was all I had to bear me up,
 That you might think you ow'd me for your life,
 And ow'd it to my duty, not my love.

"I have been injur'd, and my haughty soul
 "Could brook but ill the man who slights my bed."

Ant. Therefore you love me not.

Os. Therefore, my Lord,
 I should not love you.

Ant. Therefore you would leave me.

Os. And therefore I should leave you—if I could.

Dol. Her soul's too great, after such injuries,
 To say she loves, and yet she lets you see it.
 Her modesty and silence plead her cause.

Ant. Oh Dolabella! which way shall I turn?
I find a secret yielding in my soul;
But Cleopatra, who would die with me,
Must she be left? Pity pleads for Octavia,
But does it not plead more for Cleopatra?

Vent. Justice and pity both plead for Octavia,
For Cleopatra neither.

One would be ruin'd with you, but she first
Had ruin'd you; the other you have ruin'd,
And yet she would preserve you.
In ev'ry thing their merits are unequal.

Ant. Oh my distracted soul!

Os. Sweet Heav'n! compose it.

Come, come, my Lord, if I can pardon you
Methinks you should accept it. Look on these;
Are they not your's? or stand they thus neglected.
As they are mine? Go to him children, go,
Kneel to him, take him by the hand, speak to him,
"For you may speak, and he may own you too"
"Without a blush; and so he cannot all"
"His children. Go I say, and pull him to me,
"And pull him to yourselves, from that bad woman:"
You, Agrippina, hang upon his arms,
And you, Antonia, clasp about his waist:
If he will shake you off, if he will dash you
Against the pavement, you must bear it children,
For you are mine, and I was born to suffer.

[*Here the Children go to him, &c.*]

Vent. Was ever sight so moving! Emperour!

Dol. Friend!

Os. Husband!

Both Child. Father!

Ant. I am vanquish'd: take me
Octavia, take me children; share me all.

[*Embracing them.*]

I've been a thriftless debtor to your loves,
And run out much in riot from your stock;
But all shall be amended.

Os. Oh, blest hour!

Dol. Oh, happy change!

Vent. My joy stops at my tongue!

" But it has found two channels here for one,
 " And bubbles out above."

Ant. to Oth.] This is thy triumph: lead me where thou
 Ev'n to thy brother's camp. [wilt,

Oth. All there are your's.

Enter ALEXAS hastily.

Alex. The Queen, my mistress, Sir, and your's—

Ant. 'Tis past. Octavia, you shall stay this night;
 To-morrow Cæsar and we are one.

[*Ex. leading Oth. Dol. and the Children follow.*

Vent. There's news for you! Run my officious eunuch;
 Be sure to be the first; haste forward;
 Haste my dear eunuch, haste! [Exit.

Alex. " This downright fighting fool, this thickskull'd
 " This blunt unthinking instrument of death, [hero,
 " With plain dull virtue has outgone my wit.
 " Pleasure forsook my earliest infancy;
 " The luxury of others robb'd my cradle,
 " And ravish'd thence the promise of a man,
 " Cast out from Nature, disinherited
 " Of what her meanest children claim by kind,
 " Yet greatness kept me from contempt: that's gone.
 " Had Cleopatra follow'd my advice
 " Then he had been betray'd who now forsakes.
 " She dies for love; but she has known its joys.
 " Gods! is this just, that I who know no joys
 " Must die because she loves?

" *Enter CLEOPATRA, CHARMION, IRAS, and train.*

" Oh Madam! I have seen what blasts my eyes;
 " Octavia's here!

Cleo. " Peace with that raven's note!
 " I know it too, and now am in
 " The pangs of death.

Alex. " You are no more a queen;
 " Egypt is lost.

Cleo. " What tell'st thou me of Egypt!
 " My life, my soul, is lost! Octavia has him!
 " Oh, fatal name to Cleopatra's love!
 " My kisses, my embraces, now are her's,
 " While I—But thou hast seen my rival; speak,
 " Does she deserve this blessing? is she fair?

"Bright as a goddess? and is all perfection
 "Confin'd to her? It is. Poor I was made
 "Of that coarse matter which when she was finish'd
 "The gods threw by for rubbish.

Alex. "She is indeed a very miracle.

Cleo. "Death to my hopes, a miracle!

Alex. "A miracle— [Bowings.

"I mean of goodness; for in beauty, Madam,
 "You make all wonder cease.

Cleo. "I was too rash:

"Take this in part of recompense. But oh!

"I fear thou flatterest me. [Giving a ring.

Char. "She comes! she's here!

Iras. "Fly, Madam, Cæsar's sister!

Cleo. "Were she the sister of the Thund'rer Jove,

"And bore her brother's lightning in her eyes,

"Thus would I face my rival."

Enter OCTAVIA with VENTIDIUS, Oth. bears up to Cleo.

Oth. I need not ask if you are Cleopatra,

Your haughty carriage—

Cleo. "Shows I am a queen.

"Nor need I ask who you are.

Oth. "A Roman;

"A name that makes and can unmake a queen.

Cleo. "Your lord, the man who serves me, is a Roman.

Oth. "He was a Roman till he lost that name

"To be a slave in Egypt; but I come

"To free him hence.

Cleo. "Peace, peace, my lover's Juno.

"When he grew weary of that household clog;

"He chose my easier bonds.

Oth. "I wonder not

"Your bonds are easy; you have long been practis'd

"In that lascivious art. He's not the first

"For whom you spread your snares, let Cæsar witness.

Cleo. "I lov'd not Cæsar; 't was but gratitude

"I paid his love: the worst your malice can

"Is but to say the greatest of mankind

"Has been my slave. The next, but far above him

"In my esteem, is he whom law calls your's,

"But whom his love made mine.

Oth. "I would view nearer [Coming up close to her.

" That face which has so long usurp'd my right,

" To find th' inevitable charms that catch

" Mankind so sure, that ruin'd my dear lord.

Cleo. " Oh, you do well to search; for had you known

" But half these charms you had not lost his heart.

Oct. " Far be their knowledge from a Roman lady,

" Far from a modest wife. Shame of our sex!

" Dost thou not blush to own those black endearments

" That make sin pleasing?

Cleo. " You may blush you want 'em.

" If bounteous Nature, if indulgent Heav'n,

" Have giv'n me charms to please the bravest man

" Should I not thank 'em? should I be ashamed,

" And not be proud? I am that he has lov'd me;

" And when I love not him Heav'n change this face

" For one like that.

Oct. " Thou lov'st him not so well.

Cleo. " I love him better, and deserve him more.

Oct. " You do not, cannot: you have been his ruin

" Who made him cheap at Rome but Cleopatra?

" Who made him scorn'd abroad but Cleopatra?

" At Actium who betray'd him? Cleopatra.

" Who made his children orphans, and poor me

" A wretched widow? only Cleopatra.

Cleo. " Yet she who loves him best is Cleopatra.

" If you have suffer'd I have suffer'd more.

" You bear the specious title of a wife

" To gild your cause, and draw the pitying world

" To favour it: the world contemns poor me,

" For I have lost my honour, lost my fame,

" And stain'd the glory of my royal house,

" And all to bear the branded name of Mistress.

" There wants but life, and that too I would lose

" For him I love.

Oct. " Be it so then; take thy wish. [Exit cum suis.]

Cleo. " And 't is my wish,

" Now he is lost for whom alone I liv'd.

" My sight grows dim, and ev'ry object dances

" And swims before me in the maze of death.

" My spirits while they were oppos'd kept up;

" They could not sink beneath a rival's scorn:

" But now she's gone they faint.

“ *Alex.* Mine have had leisure
 “ To recollect their strength, and furnish counsel
 “ To ruin her who else must ruin you.
Cleo. “ Vain promiser!
 “ Lead me, my Charmion; nay, your hand too Iras;
 “ My grief has weight enough to sink you both.
 “ Conduct me to some solitary chamber,
 “ And draw the curtains round,
 “ Then leave me to myself to take alone
 “ My fill of grief;
 “ There I till death will his unkindness weep,
 “ As harmless infants moan themselves asleep.” [*Exeunt.*]

ACT IV.

SCENE, a saloon.

Enter ANTONY and DOLABELLA.

DOLABELLA.

WHY would you shift it from yourself on me?
 Can you not tell her you must part?

Ant. I cannot;
 I could pull out an eye and bid it go,
 And t’ other should not weep. Oh Dolabella!
 How many deaths are in this word Depart!
 I dare not trust my tongue to tell her so:
 One look of her’s would thaw me into tears,
 And I should melt till I were lost again.

Dol. Then let Ventidius;
 He’s rough by nature.

Ant. Oh, he’ll speak too harshly;
 He’ll kill her with the news: thou, only thou.

Dol. Nature has cast me in so soft a mould
 That “ but to hear a story feign’d for pleasure;
 “ Of some sad lover’s death, moistens my eyes,
 “ And robs me of my manhood.” — I should speak
 So faintly, with such fear to grieve her heart,
 She’d not believe it earnest.

Ant. Therefore, therefore
 Thou, only thou, art fit. Think thyself me,
 And when thou speak’st (but let it first be long)

Take off the edge from ev'ry sharper sound,
And let our parting be as gently made
As other loves begin: Wilt thou do this?

Dol. What you have said so sinks into my soul
That if I must speak I shall speak just so.

Ant. I leave you then to your sad task. Farewell!
I sent her word to meet you.

[Goes to the door and comes back]

I forgot:
Let her be told I'll make her peace with mine:
Her crown and dignity shall be preserv'd
If I have pow'r with Cæsar——Oh! be sure
To think on that.

Dol. Fear not, I will remember.

[Antony goes again to the door and comes back]

Ant. And tell her, too, how much I was constrain'd;
I did not this but with extremest force.
Desire her not to hate my memory,
For I still cherish her's——insist on that.

Dol. Trust me I'll not forget it.

Ant. Then that's all. *[Goes out and returns again]*

Wilt thou forgive my fondness this once more?
Tell her, tho' we shall never meet again,
If I should hear she took another love
The news would break my heart——Now I must go,
For ev'ry time I have return'd I feel
My soul more tender, and my next command
Would be to bid her stay and ruin both. *[Exit.]*

Dol. Men are but children of a larger growth,
Our appetites as apt to change as theirs,
And full as craving too, and full as vain;
And yet the soul shut up in her dark room,
Viewing so clear abroad at home sees nothing,
But like a mole in earth, busy and blind,
Works all her folly up, and casts it outward
To the world's open view. Thus I discover'd
And blam'd the love of ruin'd Antony,
Yet wish that I were he to be so ruin'd.

Enter VENTIDIUS above.

Vent. Alone, and talking to himself! Concern'd too!
Perhaps my guess is right: he lov'd her once,
And may pursue it still.

Dol. Oh, friendship! friendship!
 Ill canst thou answer this, and reason worse:
 Unfaithful in th' attempt, hopeless to win,
 And if I win undone. Mere madness all.
 And yet th' occasion fair. What injury
 To him to wear the robe which he throws by?

Vent. None, none at all. This happens as I wish,
 To ruin her yet more with Antony. *[Aside.*

Enter CLEOPATRA, talking with ALEXAS, CHARMION,
IRAS, on the other side.

Dol. She comes! what charms have sorrow on that
 face!

Sorrow seems pleas'd to dwell with so much sweetness;
 Yet now and then a melancholy smile
 Breaks loose, like lightning in a winter's night,
 And shows a moment's day.

Vent. If she should love him too! Her eunuch there!
 That porc'pisce bodes ill weather. Draw, draw nearer,
 Sweet devil! that I may hear.

Alex. Believe me; try
[Dolabella goes over to Charmion and Iras, seems to talk with them.]

To make him jealous; jealousy is like
 A polish'd glass held to the lips when life's in doubt:
 If there be breath 't will catch the damp and show it.

Cleo. I grant you jealousy's a proof of love,
 But 'tis a weak and unavailing medicine;
 "It puts out the disease, and makes it show,
 "But has no pow'r to cure."

Alex. 'Tis your last remedy, and strongest too:
 And then this Dolabella, who so fit
 To practise on? He's handsome, valiant, young,
 And looks as he were laid for Nature's bait
 To catch weak womens' eyes.
 He stands already more than half suspected
 Of loving you: the least kind word or glance
 You give this youth will kindle him with love;
 Then like a burning vessel set a drift
 You'll send him down amain before the wind
 To fire the heart of jealous Antony.

Cleo. Can I do this? ah, no! my love's so true
 That I can neither hide it where it is

Nor show it where it is not. "Nature meant me

"A wife, a silly harmless household dove,

"Fond without art, and kind without deceit;

"But Fortune, that has made a mistress of me,

"Has thrust me out to the wide world unfurnish'd

"Of falsehood to be happy."

Alex. Force yourself:

Th' event will be, your lover will return

Doubly desirous to possess the good

Which once he fear'd to lose.

Cleo. I must attempt it;

But oh, with what regret!

[*Exit Alex. She comes up to Dolabella.*

Vent. So now the scene draws near; they're in my reach.

Cleo. to Doll.] Discouraging with my women! Might not I
Share in your entertainment?

Char. You have been
The subject of it Madam.

Cleo. How! and how?

Iras. Such praises of your beauty!

Cleo. Mere poetry:

Your Roman wits, your Gallus and Tibullus,
Have taught you this from Cytheris and Delia.

Dol. Those Roman wits have never been in Egypt,
Cytheris and Delia else had been unsung:

I who have seen——had I been born a poet
Should chuse a nobler name.

Cleo. You flatter me;

But 't is your nation's vice: all of your country
Are flatt'ers, and all false. Your friend's like you:
I'm sure he sent you not to speak these words.

Dol. No Madam; yet he sent me——

Cleo. Well, he sent you——

Dol. Of a less pleasing errand.

Cleo. How less pleasing?

Less to yourself or me?

Dol. Madam, to both;

For you must mourn, and I must grieve to cause it.

Cleo. You Charmion and your fellow stand at distance.
Hold up my spirits! [*Aside*]——Well, now your
mournful matter,

For I'm prepar'd, perhaps can guess it too.

Dol. I wish you would, for 'tis a thankless office
To tell ill news; and I of all your sex
Most fear displeasing you.

Cleo. Of all your sex
I soonest could forgive you if you should.

Vent. Most delicate advances! Woman! woman!
Dear, damn'd, unconstant sex!

Cleo. In the first place,
I am to be forsaken; is't not so?

Dol. I wish I could not answer to that question.

Cleo. Then pass it o'er because it troubles you:
"I should have been more griev'd another time."
Next, I'm to lose my kingdom——Farewell Egypt!
Yet is there any more?

Dol. Madam, I fear
Your too deep sense of grief has turn'd your reason.

Cleo. No, no, I'm not run mad; I can bear fortune;
And love may be expell'd by other love,
As poisons are by poisons.

Dol. ——You o'erjoy me Madam,
To find your griefs so moderately borne.
You've heard the worst: all are not false like him.

Cleo. No, Heav'n forbid they should!

Dol. Some men are constant.

Cleo. And constancy deserves reward, that's certain.

Dol. Deserves it not, but give it leave to hope.

Vent. I'll swear thou hast my leave. I have enough:
"But how to manage this! Well, I'll consider." [Exit.

Dol. I came prepar'd
To tell you heavy news, news which I thought
Would fright the blood from your pale cheeks to hear;
But you have met it with a cheerfulness
That makes my task more easy; and my tongue,
Which on another's message was employ'd,
Would gladly speak its own.

Cleo. Hold, Dolabella.
First tell me, were you chosen by my Lord,
Or sought you this employment?

Dol. He pick'd me out, and as his bosom-friend
He charg'd me with his words.

Cleo. The message then
I know was tender, and each accent smooth,
To mollify that rugged word Depart.

Dol. Oh! you mistake: he chose the harshest words:
 "With fiery eyes, and with contracted brows,"
 He coin'd his face in the severest stamp,
 And fury shook his fabrick like an earthquake:
 He heav'd for vent, and burst like bellowing Ætna,
 In sounds scarce human, "Hence, away for ever!"
 "Let her begone, the blot of my renown,
 "And bane of all my hopes:

[*All the time of this speech Cleopatra seems more and more concerned, till she sinks quite down.*]

"Let her be driv'n as far as men can think
 "From man's commerce: she'll poison to the centre."

Cleo. Oh, I can bear no more! [*Faints.*]

Dol. Help, help! Oh wretch! oh curfed, curfed wretch!
 What have I done!

Char. "Help, chafe her temples Iras.

Iras. "Bend, bend her forward quickly."

Char. Heav'n be prais'd

She comes again!

Cleo. "Oh, let him not approach me!"

Why have you brought me back to this loath'd being,
 Th' abode of falsehood, violated vows,
 And injur'd love? For pity let me go;
 For if there be a place of long repose
 I'm sure I want it. "My disdainful Lord

"Can never break that quiet, nor awake

"The sleeping soul with hollowing in my tomb

"Such words as fright her hence." Unkind, unkind!

Dol. Believe me 't is against myself I speak; [*Kneeling*

That sure deserves belief. I injur'd him;

My friend ne'er spoke those words. Oh! had you seen

How often he came back, and ev'ry time

With something more obliging and more kind

To add to what he said; what dear farewells,

How almost vanquish'd by his love he parted,

And lean'd to what unwillingly he left:

I, traitor as I was, for love of you,

(But what can you not do who made me false!)

I forg'd that lie, for whose forgiveness kneels

This self-accus'd self-punish'd criminal.

Cleo. With how much ease believe we what we wish!

Rise Dolabella; if you have been guilty

I have contributed, and too much love
Has made me guilty too.

Th' advance of kindness which I made was feign'd
To call back fleeting love by jealousy;
But 't would not last. Oh! rather let me lose
Than so ignobly trifle with his heart.

Dol. I find your breast fenc'd round from human reach,
Transparent as a rock of solid chrystal,
Seen thro' but never pierc'd. "My friend, my friend!
"What endless treasure hast thou thrown away,
"And scatter'd, like an infant, in the ocean
"Vain sums of wealth which none can gather thence."

Clep. Could you not beg
An hour's admittance to his private ear?
"Like one who wanders thro' long barren wilds,
"And yet foreknows no hospitable inn
"Is near to succour hunger,
"Eats his fill before his painful march,
"So would I feed a while my famish'd eyes"
Before we part, for I have far to go
If death be far, and never must return.

VENTIDIUS, with OCTAVIA behind.

Vent. From whence you may discover—Oh, sweet, sweet!
Would you indeed! the pretty hand in earnest?

Dol. I will for this reward: [Takes her hand.

—Draw it not back;
'Tis all I e'er will beg.

Vent. They turn upon us.

"O^a. What quick eyes has Guilt!"

Vent. Seem not to have observ'd 'em, and go on.

They enter.

Dol. Saw you the Emperour Ventidius?

Vent. No;

I fought him, but I heard that he was private,
None with him but Hipparchus his freed man.

Dol. Know you his bus'ness?

Vent. Giving him instructions
And letters to his brother Cæsar.

Dol. Well,

He must be found. [Exeunt Dolabella and Cleopatra.

O^a. Most glorious impudence!

Vent. She look'd methought

As she would say, Take your old man Octavia;
Thank you, I'm better here.

Well, but what use
Make we of this discovery?

Os. Let it die.

Vent. I pity Dolabella! but she's dang'rous;
"Her eyes have pow'r beyond Thessalian charms
"To draw the moon from heav'n; for eloquence
"The seagreen Sirens taught her voice their flatt'ry;
"And while she speaks night steals upon the day
"Unmark'd of those that hear: then she's so charming
"Age buds at sight of her and swells to youth:
"The holy priests gaze on her when she smiles,
"And with heav'd hands, forgetting gravity,
"They bless her wanton eyes: ev'n I, who hate her,
"With a malignant joy behold such beauty,"
And "while I curse desire it." Antony
Must needs have some remains of passion still,
Which may ferment into a worse relapse
If now not fully cur'd——*But see he comes——*

"I know this minute
"With Cæsar he's endeavouring her peace.

Os. "You have prevail'd——but for a farther purpose
[*Walks off.*]

"I'll prove how he will relish this discovery.
"What, make a strumpet's peace! it swells my heart:
"It must not, shall not, be.

Vent. "His guards appear.

"Let me begin, and you shall second me."

Enter ANTONY.

Ant. Octavia, I was looking you my love.
What, are your letters ready? I have giv'n
My last instructions.

Os. Mine, my Lord, are written.

Ant. Ventidius! [Drawing him aside.

Vent. My Lord?

Ant. A word in private.

When saw you Dolabella?

Vent. Now my Lord

He parted hence, and Cleopatra with him.

Ant. Speak softly; 't was by my command he went
To bear my last farewell.

Vent. It look'd indeed
Like your farewell.

[*Aloud.*

Ant. More softly—My farewell!
What secret meaning have you in those words
Of my farewell? He did it by my order.

Vent. Then he obey'd your order I suppose. [*Aloud.*
You bid him do it with all gentleness,
All kindness, and all—love.

Ant. How she mourn'd!
The poor forsaken creature!

Vent. She took it as she ought; she bore your parting
As she did Cæsar's, as she would another's,
Were a new love to come.

Ant. Thou dost belie her, [*Aloud.*
Most basely and maliciously belie her.

Vent. I thought not to displease you: I have done.

Os. You seem disturb'd my Lord. [*Coming up.*

Ant. A very trifle.
Retire, my love.

Vent. It was indeed a trifle.
He sent——

Ant. No more. Look how thou disobey'st me;
Thy life shall answer it. [*Angrily.*

Os. Then 't is no trifle.

Vent. to Os.] 'Tis less; a very nothing: you too saw it
As well as I, and therefore 't is no secret.

Ant. She saw it!

Vent. Yes; she saw young Dolabella—

Ant. Young Dolabella!

Vent. Young? I think him young
And handsome too; and so do others think him.
But what of that? he went by your command,
Indeed, 'tis probable, with some kind message,
For she receiv'd it graciously: she smil'd;
And then he grew familiar with her hand,
Squeez'd it, and worry'd it with rav'nous kisses;
She blush'd, and sigh'd, and smil'd, and blush'd again;
At last she took occasion to talk softly,
“And brought her cheek up close, and lean'd on his,
“At which he whisper'd kisses back on her's;”
And then she cry'd aloud, That constancy
Should be rewarded.—This I saw and heard.

Ant. What woman was it whom you heard and saw
So playful with my friend?
Not Cleopatra?

Vent. Ev'n she my Lord!

Ant. My Cleopatra?

Vent. Your Cleopatra,
Dolabella's Cleopatra,
Ev'ry man's Cleopatra.

Ant. 'Tis false.

Vent. "I do not lie my Lord.

"Is this so strange? should mistresses be left

"And not provide against a time of change?

"You know she's not much us'd to lonely nights.

Ant. "I'll think no more on't."

I know 't is false, and see the plot betwixt you.

"You needed not have gone this way Octavia;

"What harms it you that Cleopatra's just?

"She's mine no more. I see and I forgive;

"Urge it no farther love.

Oct. "Are you concern'd

"That she's found false?

Ant. "I should be were it so;

"For tho' 't is past I would not that the world

"Should tax my former choice; that I lov'd one

"Of so light note; but I forgive you both."

Vent. What, has my age deserv'd that you should think
I would abuse your ears with perjury?

If Heav'n be true she's false.

Ant. Tho' Heav'n and earth
Should witness it I'll not believe her tainted.

Vent. I'll bring you then a witness
From hell to prove her so. Nay, go not back,

[*Seeing Alexas just entering and starting back.*

For stay you must and shall.

Alex. What means my Lord?

Vent. To make you do what most you hate, speak truth.

"You are of Cleopatra's private counsel,

"Of her bed counsel, her lascivious hours,

"Are conscious of each nightly change she makes,

"And watch her as Chaldeans do the moon,

"Can tell what signs she passes thro' what day."

Alex. My noble Lord.

Vent. My most illustrious pander!
No fine set speech, no cadence, no turn'd periods,
But a plain homespun truth, is what I ask:
I did myself o'erhear your Queen make love
To Dolabella: speak, for I will know
By your confession what more past betwixt 'em,
How near the bus'ness draws to your employment,
And when the happy hour.

Ant. Speak truth Alexas; whether it offend
Or please Ventidius care not. Justify
Thy injur'd Queen from malice: dare his worst.

Oct. aside.] "See how he gives him courage, how he fears
"To find her false, and shuts his eyes to truth,
"Willing to be misled!"

Alex. As far as love may plead for woman's frailty,
Urg'd by desert and greatness of the lover,
So far (divine Octavia) may my Queen
Stand ev'n excus'd to you for loving him
Who is your lord; so far from brave Ventidius.
May her past actions hope a fair report.

Ant. 'Tis well and truly spoken: Mark Ventidius.

Alex. To you, most noble Emperour, her strong passion
Stands not excus'd, but wholly justify'd.
Her beauty's charms alone, without her crown,
From Ind and Meroe drew the distant vows
Of fighting kings, and at her feet were laid
The sceptres of the earth, expos'd on heaps,
To chuse where she would reign;
She thought a Roman only could deserve her,
And of all Romans only Antony;
And to be less than wife to you disdain'd
Their lawful passion.

Ant. 'Tis but truth.

Alex. And yet tho' love and your unmatch'd desert
Have drawn her from the due regard of honour,
At last Heav'n open'd her unwilling eyes
To see the wrongs she offer'd fair Octavia,
Whose holy bed she lawlessly usurp'd:
The sad effects of this improsp'rous war
Confirm'd those pious thoughts.

Vent. aside.] Oh, wheel you there?
Observe him now; the man begins to mend,

And talk substantial reason. Fear not, eunuch,
The Emperour has giv'n thee leave to speak.

Alex. Else had I never dar'd t' offend his ears
With what the last necessity has urg'd
On my forsaken mistress; yet I must not
Presume to say her heart is wholly alter'd.

Ant. No, dare not for thy life, I charge thee, dare not
Pronounce that fatal word.

Os. Must I bear this? Good Heav'n! afford me patience!

[*Aside.*

Vent. On, sweet eunuch! my dear half man! proceed.

Alex. Yet Dolabella

Has lov'd her long; he next my godlike Lord
Deserves her best; and should she meet his passion,
Rejected as she is by him she lov'd—

Ant. Hence from my sight, for I can bear no more!
Let Furies drag thee quick to hell! each torturing hand
Do thou employ till Cleopatra comes,
Then join thou too and help to torture her.

[*Exit Alexas thrust out by Antony.*

Os. 'Tis not well!

Indeed my Lord 'tis much unkind to me
To shew this passion, this extreme concernment,
For an abandon'd faithless prostitute.

Ant. Octavia, leave me! I am much disorder'd!
Leave me I say!

Os. My Lord!

Ant. I bid you leave me.

Vent. "Obey him Madam; best withdraw a while,
"And see how this will work.

Os. "Wherein have I offended you my Lord
"That I am bid to leave you? am I false
"Or infamous? am I a Cleopatra?
"Were I she,
"Base as she is, you would not bid me leave you,
"But hang upon my neck, take slight excuses,
"And fawn upon my falsehood.

Ant. "'Tis too much,
"Too much, Octavia! I am prest with sorrows
"Too heavy to be borne, and you add more!
"I would retire, and recollect what's left
"Of man within to aid me.

Oct. " You would mourn
 " In private for your love who has betray'd you.
 " You did but half return to me ; your kindness
 " Linger'd behind with her. I hear, my Lord,
 " You make conditions for her,
 " And would include her treaty : wondrous proofs
 " Of love to me !

Ant. " Are you my friend Ventidius ?
 " Or are you turn'd a Dolabella too,
 " And let this Fury loose ?

Vent. " Oh be advis'd
 " Sweet Madam ! and retire."

Oct. Yes, I will go, but never to return ;
 " You shall no more be haunted with this Fury."
 My Lord, my Lord ! love will not always last
 When urg'd with long unkindness and disdain.
 Take her again whom you prefer to me ;
 She stays but to be call'd. Poor cozen'd man !
 Let a feign'd parting give her back your heart,
 Which a feign'd love first got ; for injur'd me,
 Tho' my just sense of wrongs forbid my stay
 My duty shall be your's.
 To the dear pledges of our former love
 My tenderness and care shall be transferr'd,
 And they shall cheer by turns my widow'd nights.
 So take my last farewell ! for I despair
 To have you whole, and scorn to take you half. [*Exit.*

Vent. I combat Heav'n, which blasts my best designs !
 My last attempt must be to win her back ;
 But oh ! I fear in vain. [*Exit.*

Ant. Why was I fram'd with this plain honest heart
 Which knows not to disguise its griefs and weakness,
 But bears its workings outward to the world ?
 I should have kept the mighty anguish in,
 And forc'd a smile at Cleopatra's falsehood ;
 Octavia had believ'd it and had staid.
 But I am made a shallow-forded stream,
 Seen to the bottom, all my clearness scorn'd,
 And all my faults expos'd.—See where he comes

Enter DOLABELLA.

Who has profan'd the sacred name of friend,
 And worn it into vileness !

With how secure a brow and specious form
 He gilds the secret villain! Sure that face
 Was meant for honesty, but Heav'n mismatch'd it,
 And furnish'd treason out with nature's pomp
 To make its work more easy.

Dol. "O my friend!"

Ant. Well, Dolabella, you perform'd my message?

Dol. I did unwillingly.

Ant. Unwillingly!

Was it so hard for you to bear our parting?
 You should have wish'd it.

Dol. Why?

Ant. Because you love me;
 And she receiv'd my message with as true
 With as unfeign'd a sorrow as you brought it?

Dol. She loves you ev'n to madness.

Ant. Oh! I know it.

You Dolabella do not better know
 How much she loves me. And should I
 Forsake this beauty, this allperfect creature?

Dol. I could not were she mine.

Ant. And yet you first
 Persuaded me. How come you alter'd since?

Dol. I said at first I was not fit to go:
 I could not hear her sighs and see her tears.
 But pity must prevail; and so perhaps
 It may again with you; for I have promis'd
 That she should take her last farewell; and see
 She comes to claim my word.

Enter CLEOPATRA.

Ant. False Dolabella!

Dol. What's false my Lord?

Ant. Why, Dolabella's false,
 And Cleopatra's false; both false and faithless.
 Draw near you welljoin'd wickedness, you serpents,
 Whom I have in my kindly bosom warm'd
 Till I am stung to death.

Dol. My Lord, have I
 Deserv'd to be thus us'd?

Cleo. Can Heav'n prepare
 A newer torment? can it find a curse
 Beyond our separation?

Ant. Yes, if Fate

Be just much greater: "Heav'n should be ingenious

"In punishing such crimes. The rolling stone

"And gnawing vulture were slight pains, invented

"When Jove was young, and no examples known

"Of mighty ills; but you have ripen'd sin

"To such a monstrous growth 't will pose the gods

"To find an equal torture." Two, two such!

Oh, there's no farther name; two such—to me,

To me, who lock'd my soul within your breasts,

Had no desires, no joys, no life, but you;

"When half the globe was mine I gave it you

"In dowry with my heart: I had no use,

"No fruit, of all but you:" a friend and mistress

Was what the world could give. O Cleopatra!

Oh Dolabella! how could you betray

This tender heart, which with an infant fondness

Lay lull'd betwixt your bosoms, and there slept

Secure of injur'd faith?

Dol. If she has wrong'd you
Heav'n, hell, and you, revenge it.

Ant. If she has wrong'd me!

"Thou wouldst evade thy part of guilt: but swear

"Thou lov'st not her.

Dol. "Not so as I love you.

Ant. "Not so! Swear, swear, I say, thou dost not love

Dol. "No more than friendship will allow. [her.

Ant. "No more!

"Friendship allows thee nothing: thou art perjur'd—

"And yet thou didst not swear thou lov'st her not;

"But not so much, no more. Oh, trifling hypocrite!

"Who durst not own to her thou dost not love,

"Nor own to me thou dost!" Ventidius heard it,

Octavia saw it.

Cleo. They are enemies.

Ant. Alexas is not so; he, he confess it;
He who next hell best knew it, he avow'd it.

Why do I seek a proof beyond yourself? [To *Dol.*

You whom I sent to bear my last farewell

Return'd to plead her stay.

Dol. What shall I answer?

If to have lov'd be guilt then I have sinn'd;

But if to have repented of that love
Can wash away my crime, I have repented;
Yet if I have offended past forgiveness
Let her not suffer: she is innocent.

Cleo. "Ah, what will not a woman do who loves!
"What means will she refuse to keep that heart
"Where all her joys are plac'd! 'Twas I encourag'd,
" 'Twas I blew up, the fire that scorch'd his soul,
"To make you jealous, and by that regain you:
"But all in vain; I could not counterfeit:
"In spite of all the dams my love broke o'er,
"And drown'd my heart again: Fate took th' occasion,
"And thus one minute's feigning has destroy'd
"My whole life's truth."

Ant. Thin cobweb arts of falsehood,
Seen and broke thro' at first.

Dol. Forgive your mistress.

Cleo. Forgive your friend.

Ant. "You have convinc'd yourselves;
"You plead each other's cause. What witnesses have you
"That you but meant to raise my jealousy?"

Cleo. "Ourselves and Heav'n.

Ant. Guilt witnesses for guilt! Hence love and friend-
"You have no longer place in human breasts; [ship!
"These two have driv'n you out: avoid my sight;
"I wou'd not kill the man whom I have lov'd,
"And cannot hurt the woman; but avoid me;
"I do not know how long I can be tame;
"For if I stay one minute more to think
"How I am wrong'd my justice and revenge
"Will cry so loud within me that my pity
"Will not be heard for either.

Dol. "Heav'n has but
"Our sorrow for our sins, and then delights
"To pardon erring man; sweet mercy seems
"Its darling attribute, which limits justice,
"As if there were degrees in infinite,
"And infinite would rather want perfection
"Than punish to extent."

Ant. I can forgive
A foe, but not a mistress and a friend:
Treason is there in its most horrid shape

Where trust is greatest; "and the soul resign'd
"Is stabb'd by its own guards." I'll hear no more:
Hence from my sight for ever.

Cleo. How? for ever!

I cannot go one moment from your sight,
And must I go for ever?
My joys, my only joys, are centred here:
What place have I to go to? my own kingdom?
That I have lost for you; or to the Romans?
They hate me for your sake: or must I wander
The wide world o'er a helpless banish'd woman,
Banish'd for love of you, banish'd from you;
Ay, there's the banishment! Oh, hear me, hear me,
With strictest justice, for I beg no favour,
And if I have offended you then kill me,
But do not banish me.

Ant. I must not hear you;
I have a fool within me takes your part,
But honour stops my ears.

Cleo. For pity hear me!

"Would you cast off a slave who follow'd you,
"Who crouch'd beneath your spurn?—He has no pity!
"See if he gives one tear to my departure,
"One look, one kind farewell: oh, iron heart!
"Let all the gods look down and judge betwixt us
"If he did ever love!

Ant. "No more. Alexas!

Dol. "A perjur'd villain!

Ant. to Cleo.] Your Alexas! your's!

Cleo. "Oh, 't was his plot; his ruinous design
"T'engage you in my love by jealousy.
"Hear him; confront him with me; let him speak.

Ant. "I have, I have.

Cleo. "And if he clear me not—

Ant. "Your creature! one who hangs upon your smiles,
"Watches your eye, to say or to unsay
"Whate'er you please." I am not to be mov'd.

Cleo. Then must we part? farewell my cruel Lord.
Th' appearance is against me; and I go
Unjustifi'd for ever from your sight.
How I have lov'd you know; how yet I love
My only comfort is I know myself:

I love you more, ev'n now you are unkind,
Than when you lov'd me most; so well, so truly,
I'll never strive against it, but die pleas'd
To think you once were mine.

Ant. Good Heav'n! they weep at parting.
Must I weep too? that calls 'em innocent.
I must not weep; and yet I must, to think
That I must not forgive——
Live, but live wretched; 't is but just you should
Who made me so: live from each other's sight;
Let me not hear you meet. Set all the earth
And all the seas betwixt your sunder'd loves;
View nothing common but the sun and skies.
Now all take several ways,
And each your own sad fate with mine deplore
That you were false, and I could trust no more.

[*Exeunt severally.*]

ACT V.

SCENE, *the temple.*

Enter CLEOPATRA, CHARMION, and IRAS.

CHARMION.

“BE juster, Heav'n! such virtue punish'd thus
“Will make us think that Chance rules all above,
“And shuffles with a random hand the lots
“Which man is forc'd to draw.”

Cleo. I could tear out these eyes that gain'd his heart
And had not pow'r to keep it. Oh the curse
Of doting on, ev'n when I find it dotage!
Bear witness Gods! you heard him bid me go;
You whom he mock'd with imprecating vows
Of promis'd faith—I'll die, I will not bear it.

“You may hold me——

[*She pulls out her dagger, and they hold her.*]

“But I can keep my breath; I can die inward,
“And choke this love.”

Enter ALEXAS.

Iras. “Help, oh Alexas, help!
“The Queen grows desp'rate, her soul struggles in her,

"With all the agonies of love and rage,

"And strives to force its passage.

Cleo. "Let me go."

Art thou there traitor!—Oh,

Oh for a little breath to vent my rage!

"Give, give me way, and let me loose upon him."

Alex. Yes, I deserve it for my illtim'd truth.

"Was it for me to prop

"The ruins of a falling majesty,

"To place myself beneath the mighty flaw,

"Thus to be crush'd and pounder'd into atoms

"By its o'erwhelming weight? 'Tis too presuming

"For subjects to preserve that wilful pow'r

"Which courts its own destruction."

Cleo. I would reason

More calmly with you. Did you not o'errule

And force my plain, direct, and open love

Into these crooked paths of jealousy?

Now, what 's th' event? Octavia is remov'd,

But Cleopatra banish'd. "Thou, thou, villain,

"Hast push'd my boat to open sea, to prove

"At my sad cost if thou canst steer it back.

"It cannot be; I'm lost too far; I'm ruin'd:

"Hence thou impostor, traitor, monster, devil—

"I can no more: thou and my griefs have sunk

"Me down so low that I want voice to curse thee.

Alex. "Suppose some shipwreck'd seaman near the shore,

"Dropping and faint with climbing up the cliff,

"If from above some charitable hand

"Pull him to safety, hazarding himself

"To draw the other's weight, would he look back

"And curse him for his pains? The case is your's;

"But one step more and you have gain'd the height.

Cleo. "Sunk, never more to rise.

Alex. "Octavia's gone, and Dolabella banish'd."

Believe me, Madam, Antony is your's:

His heart was never lost, but started off

To jealousy, love's last retreat and covert,

Where it lies hid in shades, watchful in silence,

And list'ning for the sound that calls it back.

Some other, any man, 'tis so advanc'd,

May perfect this unfinish'd work, which I
(Unhappy only to myself) have left
So easy to his hand.

Cleo. Look well thou do'st, else——

Alex. Else what your silence threatens—Antony
Is mounted up the Pharos, from whose turret
He stands surveying our Egyptian gallies
Engag'd with Cæsar's fleet: now death or conquest;
If the first happen Fate acquits my promise;
If we o'ercome the conqueror is your's.

[*A distant shout within.*

Char. Have comfort Madam: did you mark that shout?

[*Second shout nearer.*

Iras. Hark! they redouble it.

Alex. 'Tis from the port;
The loudness shows it near. Good news, kind Heav'ns!
Cleo. "Osiris make it so!"

Enter SERAPION.

Ser. Where, where's the Queen?

Alex. "How frightfully the holy coward stares!
"As if not yet recover'd of th' assault,
"When all his gods, and what's more dear to him,
"His off'rings, were at stake.

Ser. Oh, horror, horror!
Egypt has been; the latest hour is come.
The queen of nations from her ancient seat
Is sunk for ever in the dark abyss;
Time has unroll'd her glories to the last,
And now clos'd up the volume.

Cleo. Be more plain:
Say whence thou cam'st, (tho' Fate is in thy face,
Which from thy haggard eyes looks wildly out,
And threatens ere thou speak'st.)

Ser. I came from Pharos,
From viewing (spare me, and imagine it)
Our land's last hope, your navy——

Cleo. Vanquish'd?

Ser. No;
They fought not.

Cleo. Then they fled.

Ser. Nor that: I saw
With Antony your well appointed fleet

Row out, and thrice he wav'd his hand on high,
And thrice with cheerful cries they shouted back:
" 'Twas then false Fortune, like a fawning strumpet
" About to leave the bankrupt prodigal,
" With a dissembled smile would kiss at parting,
" And flatter to the last:" the welltim'd oars
Now dipt from ev'ry bark, now smoothly run
To meet the foe; and soon indeed they met,
But not as foes. In few, we saw their caps
On either side thrown up: th' Egyptian gallies,
Receiv'd like friends, past thro', and fell behind
The Roman rear; and now they all come forward,
And ride within the port.

Cleo. Enough Serapion;
I've heard my doom! This needed not, you gods!
When I lost Antony your work was done.
" 'Tis but superfluous malice." Where's my Lord?
How bears he this last blow?

Ser. His fury cannot be express'd by words:
Thrice he attempted headlong to have fall'n
Full on his foes, and aim'd at Cæsar's galley:
Withheld, he raves on you, cries he's betray'd.
Should he now find you——

Alex. Shun him, seek your safety,
Till you can clear your innocence.

Cleo. I'll stay.

Alex. You must not; haste you to the Monument
While I make speed to Cæsar.

Cleo. Cæsar! no;
I have no bus'ness with him.

Alex. I can work him
To spare your life, and let this madman perish.

Cleo. Base fawning wretch! wouldst thou betray him too?
Hence from my sight, I will not hear a traitor:
'Twas thy design brought all this ruin on us.

Serapion, thou art honest; counsel me:
But haste, each moment's precious.

Ser. Retire; you must not yet see Antony.
He who began this mischief
'Tis just he tempt the danger: let him clear you;
And since he offer'd you his servile tongue
To gain a poor precarious life from Cæsar,

Let him expose that fawning eloquence
And speak to Antony.

Alex. Oh Heav'ns! I dare not:
I meet my certain death.

Cleo. Slave, thou deserv'st it.
Not that I fear my Lord will I avoid him;
I know him noble: when he banish'd me,
And thought me false, he scorn'd to take my life:
But I'll be justify'd, and then die with him.

Alex. Oh! pity me, and let me follow you.

Cleo. To death, if thou stir hence. Speak, if thou canst
Now for thy life, which basely thou wouldst save,
While mine I prize at this. Come, good Serapion.

[*Exeunt Cleopatra, Serapion, Charmion, and Iras.*]

Alex. Oh, that I less could fear to lose this being,
Which like a snowball in my coward hand
The more 'tis grasp'd the faster melts away.
Poor reason! what a wretched aid art thou!
For still in spite of thee
'These two long lovers, soul and body, dread
Their final separation. Let me think;
What can I say to save myself from death?
No matter what becomes of Cleopatra.

Ant. Which way? where?

[*Within.*]

Vent. This leads to th' Monument.

[*Within.*]

Alex. Ah me! I hear him: yet I'm unprepar'd:
My gift of lying's gone;
And this court-devil, which I so oft' have rais'd,
Forsakes me at my need. I dare not stay,
Yet cannot go far hence.

[*Exit.*]

Enter ANTONY and VENTIDIUS.

Ant. Oh, happy Cæsar! thou hast men to lead.
Think not 'tis thou hast conquer'd Antony,
But Rome has conquer'd Egypt. I'm betray'd.

Vent. "Curse on this treach'rous train!

" Their soil and heav'n infect them all with baseness;
" And their young souls come tainted to the world
" With the first breath they draw.

Apt. "Th' original villain sure no god created;
" He was a bastard of the Sun by Nile;

"Ap'd into man with all his mother's mud:
"Crusted about his soul."

Vent. The nation is
One universal traitor, and their Queen
The very spirit and extract of 'em all.

Ant. Is there yet left
A possibility of aid and valour?
Is there one god unsworn to my destruction,
"The least unmortgag'd hope?" for if there be:
Methinks I cannot fall beneath the fate
Of such a boy as Cæsar.
"The world's one half is yet in Antony,
"And from each limb of it that's hew'd away.
"The soul comes back to me."

Vent. There yet remain
Three légions in the town; the last assault
Lopt off the rest. If death be your design,
As I must wish it now, these are sufficient
To make a heap about us of dead foes,
An honest pile for burial.

Ant. They're enough.
We'll not divide our stars, but side by side
Fight emulous, and with malicious eyes
Survey each other's acts: "so ev'ry death
"Thou giv'st I'll take on me as a just debt,
"And pay thee back a soul."

Vent. Now you shall see I love you. "Not a word
"Of chiding more." By my few hours of life
I am so pleas'd with this brave Roman fate
That I would not be Cæsar to outlive you!
When we put off this flesh, and mount together,
I shall be shown to all th' ethereal crowd;
Lo! this is he who dy'd with Antony.

Ant. Who knows but we may pierce thro' all their troops,
And reach my veterans yet? 'Tis worth the tempting
"T' o'erleap this gulf of fate,
"And leave your wand'ring Destinies behind."

Enter ALEXAS trembling.

Vent. See, see that villain!
See "Cleopatra stamp upon that face,
"With all her cunning, all her arts of falsehood!"

"How she looks out thro' those dissembling eyes!"
 How he has set his count'nance for deceit,
 And promises a lie before he speaks!
 Let me dispatch him first.

[Drawing.

Alex. "Oh, spare me, spare me!"

Ant. Hold; he's not worth your killing. On thy life,
 (Which thou may'st keep, because I scorn to take it)
 No syllable to justify thy Queen;
 Save thy base tongue its office.

Alex. Sir, she's gone
 Where she shall never be molested more
 By love or you.

Ant. Fled to her Dolabella!

Die, traitor; I revoke my promise; die. [Going to kill him.

Alex. Oh hold; she is not fled.

Ant. She is; my eyes
 Are open to her falsehood. My whole life
 Has been a golden dream of love and friendship,
 But now I wake, I'm like a merchant rous'd
 From soft repose to see his vessel sinking
 And all his wealth cast o'er. Ungrateful woman!
 Who follow'd me but as the swallow summer,
 "Hatching her young ones in my kindly beams,
 "Singing her flatt'ries to my morning wake;"
 But now my winter comes she spreads her wings,
 And seeks the spring of Cæsar.

Alex. Think not so;
 Her fortunes have in all things mixt with your's:
 Had she betray'd her naval force to Rome
 How easily might she have gone to Cæsar,
 Secure by such a bribe?

Vent. She sent it first
 To be more welcome after.

Ant. 'Tis too plain,
 Else wou'd she have appear'd to clear herself.

Alex. "Too fatally she has:" she could not bear
 To be accus'd by you, but shut herself
 Within her monument, look'd down and sigh'd,
 While from her unchang'd face the silent tears
 Dropt as they had not leave, but stole their parting.
 Some undistinguish'd words she inly murmur'd;

At last she rais'd her eyes, and with such looks
As dying Lucrece cast——

Ant. My heart forbodes——

Vent. “All for the best.” Go on.

Alex. She snatch'd her poniard,
And ere we could prevent the fatal blow
Plung'd it within her breast; then turn'd to me;
Go, bear my Lord, said she, my last farewell,
And ask him if he yet suspect my faith.
More she was saying, but death rush'd betwixt.
She half pronounc'd your name with her last breath,
And bury'd half within her.

Vent. Heav'n be prais'd!

Ant. Then art thou innocent my poor dear love!
And art thou dead?
Oh, those two words! their sound should be divided:
Hadst thou been false and dy'd, or hadst thou liv'd
And hadst been true—But innocence and death!
This shows not well above. Then what am I?
The murd'rer of this truth, this innocence!
Thoughts cannot form themselves in words so horrid
As can express my guilt!

Vent. Is't come to this? The gods have been too gra-
And thus you thank 'em for't. [cious,

Ant. to Alex.] Why stay'st thou here?

“Is it for thee to spy upon my soul,
“And see its inward mourning? Get thee hence.”
Thou art not worthy to behold what now
Becomes a Roman Emp'rour to perform.

Alex. “He loves her still; [Aside.
“His grief betrays it. Good! the joy to find
“She's yet alive completes the reconciliation:
“I've sav'd myself and her. But oh! the Romans!
“Fate comes too fast upon my wit,
“Hunts me too hard, and meets me at each double.”

[Exit.

Vent. Wou'd she had dy'd a little sooner tho',
Before Octavia went; you might have treated;
Now 't will look tame, and wou'd not be receiv'd.
Come, rouse yourself, and let's die warm together.

Ant. “I will not fight; there's no more work for war;
“The bus'ness of my angry hours is done.

Vent. "Cæsar is at your gate."

Ant. Why, let him enter :

"He's welcome now.

Vent. "What lethargy has crept into your soul ?

Ant. "'Tis but a scorn of life, and just desire

"To free myself from bondage.

Vent. "Do it bravely.

Ant. "I will, but not by fighting." Oh Ventidius!

What should I fight for now? my Queen is dead :

I was but great for her : my pow'r, my empire,

Were but my merchandise to buy her love,

And conquer'd kings my factors. Now she's dead

Let Cæsar take the world—

"An empty circle, since the jewel's gone

"Which made it worth my strife : my being's nauseous,

"For all the bribes of life are gone away."

Vent. Wou'd you be taken ?

Ant. Yes, I wou'd be taken ;

But as a Roman ought, dead, my Ventidius?

"For I'll convey my soul from Cæsar's reach,

"And lay down life myself. 'Tis time the world

"Should have a lord, and know whom to obey.

"We two have kept its homage in suspense,

"And bent the globe, on whose each side we trod,

"Till it was dinted inwards. Let him walk

"Alone upon 't : I'm weary of my part.

"My torch is out, and the world stands before me :

"Like a black desert at th' approach of night :

"I'll lay me down and stray no farther on.

Vent. "I could be griev'd,

"But that I'll not outlive you." Chuse your death,

For I have seen him in such various shapes

I care not which I take : I'm only troubled

The life I bear is worn to such a rag

'Tis scarce worth giving. I could wish indeed

We threw it from us with a better grace,

That like two lions taken in the toils :

We might at least thrust out our paws and wound

The hunters that enclose us.

Ant. "I have thought on't ;

"Ventidius, you must live.

Vent. "I must not Sir.

Ant. "Wilt thou not live to speak some good of me?
"To stand by my fair fame, and guard th' approaches
"From the ill tongues of men?"

Vent. "Who shall guard mine
"For living after you?"

Ant. "Say I command it.

Vent. "If we die well our deaths will speak themselves,
"And need no living witness."

Ant. Thou hast lov'd me,
And fain I would reward thee. I must die;
Kill me, and take the merit of my death
To make thee friends with Cæsar.

Vent. Thank your kindness!
You said I lov'd you, and in recompense
You bid me turn a traitor! Did I think
You would have us'd me thus! that I should die
With a hard thought of you!

Ant. Forgive me Roman.
Since I have heard of Cleopatra's death
My reason bears no rule upon my tongue,
But lets my thoughts break all at random out.
I've thought better; do not deny me twice.

Vent. By Heav'n I will not!
Let it not be t' outlive you.

Ant. Kill me first,
And then die thou; for 'tis but just thou serve
Thy friend before thyself.

Vent. Give me your hand—
We soon shall meet again. Now farewell Emperour!
[Embrace.

Methinks that word's too cold to be my last:
Since death sweeps all distinctions farewell Friend.
That's all——

I will not make a bus'ness of a trifle—
And yet I cannot look on you and kill you:
Pray turn your face.

Ant. I do: strike home; be sure.

Vent. Home as my sword will reach. [Kills himself.

Ant. Oh thou mistak'st!
That wound was none of thine; give it me back:
Thou robb'st me of my death.

Vent. I do indeed;

But think 't is the first time I e'er deceiv'd you,
If that may plead my pardon. And you, gods!
Forgive me if you will; for I die perjur'd
Rather than kill my friend.

[Dies.]

Ant. Farewell! ever my leader, ev'n in death!
My Queen and thou have got the start of me,
And I'm the lag of honour.—Gone so soon!
Is death no more! "He us'd him carelessly
"With a familiar kindness, ere he knock'd
"Ran to the door and took him in his arms,
"As who should say, you're welcome at all hours,
"A friend need give no warning—Books had spoil'd him,
"For all the learn'd are cowards by profession."
'Tis not worth
My further thought; for death, for ought I know,
Is but to think no more. Here's to be satisfy'd.

[Falls on his sword.]

I've mis'd my heart—Oh, unperforming hand!
Thou never couldst have err'd in a worse time.
"My Fortune jades me to the last; and Death,
"Like a great man, takes state, and makes me wait
"For my admittance"—
Some perhaps from Cæsar!
"If he should find me living, and suspect
"That I play'd booty with my life!" I'll mend
My work ere they can reach me.

[Rises upon his knees.]

Enter CLEOPATRA, CHARMION, and IRAS.

Cleo. Where is my Lord! where is he!

Char. "There he lies,

"And dead Ventidius by him."

Cleo. My fears were prophets! I am come too late!

Oh, that accurs'd Alexas!

[Runs to him.]

Ant. Art thou living!

Or am I dead before I knew, and thou
The first kind ghost that meets me!

Cleo. "Help me seat him!

"Send quickly, send for help! [They place him in a chair.]

Ant. "I am answer'd:

"We live both. Sit thee down my Cleopatra!

"I'll make the most I can of life to stay

"A moment more with thee."

Cleo. How is it with you?

Ant. 'Tis as with a man
Removing in a hurry; all pack'd up
But one dear jewel that his haste forgot,
And he for that returns upon the spur;
So I come back for thee.

Cleo. Too long, ye Heav'ns! you have been cruel to me!
Oh, now be kind, and give me back
His fleeting life!

Ant. It will not be my love!
I keep my soul by force.
Say but thou art not false.

Cleo. 'Tis now too late
To say I'm true; I'll prove it and die with you,
Unknown to me Alexas feign'd my death,
Which when I knew I hasted to prevent
This fatal consequence. My fleet betray'd
Both you and me.

Ant. And Dolabella——

Cleo. Scarce esteem'd before he lov'd, but hated now.

Ant. Enough! my life's not long enough for more.
Thou say'st thou wilt come after: I believe thee;
For I can now believe whate'er thou say'st
That we may part more kindly.

Cleo. I will come;
Doubt not, my life! I'll come, and quickly too!
Cæsar shall triumph o'er no part of thee.

Ant. But grieve not while thou stay'st
My last disastrous times!
Think we have had a clear and glorious day,
And Heav'n did kindly to delay the storm
Just till our close of ev'ning. Ten years love,
And not a moment lost, but all improv'd
To th' utmost joys? What ages have we liv'd!
And now to die each other's! and so dying,
While hand in hand we walk in groves below
Whole troops of lovers' ghosts shall flock about us,
And all the train be ours.

Cleo. Your words are like the notes of dying swans,
Too sweet to last. Were there so many hours
For your unkindness and not one for love!

Ant. No, not a minute—this one kiss—more worth
Than all I leave to Cæsar.— [Dies.]

Cleo. Oh tell me so again!

"And take ten thousand kisses for that word"—
My Lord! my Lord! speak, if you yet have being!
Sigh to me if you cannot speak! or cast
One look! do any thing that shows you live!

Iras. He's gone too far to hear you,
"And this you see a lump of senseless clay,
"The leavings of a soul."

Char. Remember, Madam,
He charg'd you not to grieve.

Cleo. And I'll obey him.
I have not lov'd a Roman not to know
What should become his wife—his wife, my Charmion!
For 'tis to that high title I aspire;
And now I'll not die less. "Let dull Octavia
"Survive to mourn him dead: my noble fate
"Shall knit our spousals with a tie too strong
"For Roman laws to break."

Iras. Will you then die?

Cleo. Why shouldst thou make that question?
Fly both, and bring the cure of all our ills.

Iras. "Cæsar is merciful.—

Cleo. "Let him be so
"To those that want his mercy: my poor Lord
"Made no such covenant with him to spare me
"When he was dead. Yield me to Cæsar's pride!
"What! to be led in triumph thro' the streets,
"A spectacle to base plebeian eyes,
"While some dejected friend of Antony's
"Close in a corner shakes his head, and mutters
"A secret curse on her who ruin'd him—
"I'll none of that——

Char. "Whatever you resolve
"I'll follow, ev'n to death.

Iras. "I only fear'd
"For you, but more should fear to live without you.

Cleo. "Why, now 'tis as it should be. Quick, my friends,
"Dispatch; ere this the town's in Cæsar's hands:
"My Lord looks down concern'd, and fears my stay,
"Lest I should be surpris'd:
"Keep him not waiting for his love too long.
"You, Charmion, bring my crown and richest jewels;

"With 'em the wreath of victory I made
 "(Vain augury!) for him who now lies dead:
 "You, Iras, bring the cure of all our ills."

Iras. The aspicks Madam?

Cleo. Must I bid you twice? [*Ex. Char. and Iras.*]

'Tis sweet to die when they would force life on me,
 To rush into the dark abode of death

And meet my love,

"And seize him first! If he be like my love

"He is not frightful sure!

"We're now alone, in secrecy and silence,

"And is not this like lovers? I may kiss

"These pale cold lips—Octavia does not see me;

"And oh! 't is better far to have him thus

"Than see him in her arms!"—Oh welcome, welcome!

Enter CHARMION, and IRAS with the aspicks, &c.

Char. "What must be done?

Cleo. "Short ceremony friends;

"But yet it must be decent. First, this laurel:

"Shall crown my hero's head: he fell not basely,

"Nor left his shield behind him. Only thou

"Couldst triumph o'er thyself, and thou alone

"Wert worthy so to triumph.

Char. "To what end

"These ensigns of your pomp and royalty?"

Cleo. "Dull that thou art! why, 't is to meet my love,

"As when I saw him first on Cydno's bank,

"All sparkling like a goddess; so adorn'd

"I'll find him once again; my second spousals

"Shall match my first in glory. Haste, haste, both,

"And dress the bride of Antony!

Char. "'Tis done.

Cleo. "Now set me by my Lord. I claim this place,

"For I must conquer Cæsar too like him,

"And win my share o' th' world. Hail, you dear relicks

"Of my immortal love!

"Oh, let no impious hand remove you hence,

"But rest for ever here! let Egypt give

"His death that peace which it deny'd his life.

"Reach me the casket.

Iras. "Underneath the fruit the aspick lies."

Cleo. Welcome, thou kind deceiver!

[*Putting aside the leaves.*]

Thou best of thieves! who with an easy key
Dost open life, and unperceiv'd by us
Ev'n steals us from ourselves, "discharging so
"Death's dreadful office better than himself,
"Touching our limbs so gently into slumber
"That Death stands by, deceiv'd by his own image,
"And thinks himself but Sleep."

Serv. The queen where is she?

[*Within.*]

The town is yielded, Cæsar's at the gates.

Cleo. He comes too late t'invade the rights of Death.
Haste, haste, my friend, and rouse the serpent's fury.

[*Holds out her arm, and draws it back.*]

Coward flesh——

Wouldst thou conspire with Cæsar to betray me,
As thou wert none of mine? I'll force thee to 't,
And not be sent by him,
But bring myself, my soul, to Antony.

[*Turns aside, and then shows her arm bloody.*]

Take hence; the work is done!

Serv. Break ope the door,

[*Within.*]

And guard the traitor well.

Char. "The next is ours.

Iras. "Now Charmion, to be worthy

"Of our great queen and mistress." [*They apply the aspicks.*]

Cleo. Already, Death, I feel thee in my veins;

I go with such a will to find my Lord
That we shall quickly meet.

A heavy numbness creeps thro' ev'ry limb,
And now 't is at my head: my eyelids fall,
And my dear love is vanish'd in a mist!

"Where shall I find him, where? oh! turn me to him!

"And lay me on his breast!"—Cæsar, thy worst!

Now part us if thou canst.

[*Dies.*]

[*Iras sinks down at her feet and dies, Charmion stands behind her chair as dressing her head.*]

Enter SERAPION, two Priests, ALEXAS bound, and Egyptians.

2 Priest. Behold, Serapion, what havock Death has

Serv. 'Twas what I fear'd.

[*made*]

"Charmion, is this well done?"

Char. "Yes, 't is well done, and like a queen, the last
"Of her great race. I follow her. [Sinks down. Dies.

Alex. "'Tis true
"She has done well: much better thus to die
"Than live to make a holyday in Rome."

Serv. See how the lovers lie in state together
As they were giving laws to half mankind!
Th' impress of a smile left in her face
Shows she dy'd pleas'd with him for whom she liv'd,
And went to charm him in another world.
Cæsar's just ent'ring; grief has now no leisure.
Secure that villain, as our pledge of safety,
To grace th' imperial triumph. Sleep, blest pair!
Secure from human chance long ages out,
While all the storms of fate fly o'er your tomb;
And Fame to late posterity shall tell
No lovers liv'd so great or dy'd so well. [Exeunt.

EPILOGUE.

*POETS, like disputants, when reasons fail,
Have one sure refuge left, and that's to rail:
Fop, coxcomb, fool, are thunder'd thro' the pit,
And this is all their equipage of wit.
We wonder how the devil this difference grows
Betwixt our fools in verse and your's in prose;
For faith the quarrel rightly understood,
'Tis civil war with their own flesh and blood.
The threadbare author bates the gawdy coat,
And swears at the gilt coach, but swears a-foot;
For 'tis observ'd of ev'ry scribbling man
He grows a fop as fast as e'er he can,
Prunes up, and asks the oracle his glass
If pink or purple best becomes his face?
For our poor wretch! he neither rails nor prays,
Nor likes your wit, just as you like his plays,
He has not yet so much of Mr. Bays:
He does his best, and if he cannot please
Would quietly sue out his writ of ease;
Yet if he might his own grand jury call,
By the fair sex he begs to stand or fall.
Let Caesar's pow'r the men's ambition move,
But grace you him who lost the world for love.
Yet if some antiquated lady say
The last age is not copy'd in his play,
Heav'n help the man who for that face must drudge
Which only has the wrinkles of a judge.
Let not the young and beauteous join with those,
For should you raise such numerous hosts of foes,
Young wits and sparks be to his aid must call;
'Tis more than one man's work to please you all.*

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